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Guidance

School inspection handbook: section 8 for September 2021

Updated 3 December 2021

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Introduction

1. This handbook is intended to set out, for inspectors and schools, the processes for inspections that are carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005.[footnote 1] We would recommend that schools also familiarise themselves with our school inspection handbook.[footnote 2], which sets out our policies in detail, including our grade descriptors.

2. Section 8 enables Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) to carry out inspections for a range of purposes, including monitoring visits and the Ofsted Parent's Inspection (OPI). It also stipulates that on a category of concern following a section 5 inspection, HMI may decide that a section 8 inspection should be carried out to inform the category of concern decision. For example, inspecting a sixth-form subject or a particular aspect of the work of schools. Section 8 is also used to enable HMCI, where she has concerns, to inspect a school that is not currently in receipt of a section 5.

3. Section 8(1) provides the statutory basis for the Secretary of State to request an inspection. Section 8(1) of the Education Act 2005 requires HMCI to inspect and report on a school or class of pupils, when requested to do so by the Secretary of State.

4. Part 1 of this handbook covers the general policy and principles that apply to inspections carried out under section 8.

5. Part 2 of this handbook sets out the arrangements for carrying out inspections under section 8 in the following categories:

- section 8 inspections of schools judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent section 5 inspection
- monitoring inspections of schools judged to require improvement
- monitoring inspections of schools judged to have serious weaknesses
- monitoring inspections of schools judged to require special measures
- any inspection that is carried out in other circumstances where the inspection has no bearing on the school's current category of concern, for example:
- pre-transitional behaviour inspections

6. Please refer to the Inspection during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic: section of the school inspection handbook – section 8 for information and guidance on inspection during this period.

Privacy notice

7. During inspection, inspectors will collect information about staff and children at the school. Inspectors will use this information to the extent we are required to the statutory office holder, and only for the purposes of carrying out the inspection. We will not share information with other organisations or individuals, except in the circumstances set out in our privacy notice. In most cases, we will record names, however, some of the information may make it possible to identify individuals. We will not publish information that identifies individuals or individual children, but we will usually name the inspectors and the proprietor (where applicable).

8. Inspectors and organisations have legal requirements to provide information to Ofsted. The Education (Independent Schools) (Inspection) Regulations 2005 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2010 and Education (EPI) (amended with individual powers)[footnote 3] mandate the inspection of school inspections.[footnote 4]

9. In the vast majority of settings, we will gather evidence electronically using a range of secure systems. We will use the information we collect during inspection and transferred to Ofsted's systems. Our inspectors may take photographs of pupils' work. These will be stored in evidence, but not retained by the inspector personally.

Part 1. Inspection policy and principles for inspection carried out under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005

10. The statutory power to inspect schools requires us to have to carry out inspections in the circumstances described in the introduction section and HMCI's discretionary power to inspect schools. We have a duty to carry out our inspections in a way that ensures they are informed about policies and procedures for using the school inspection power in particular situations. It applies to school inspections carried out from September 2019 under the inspection inspection framework (EIF).

Before the inspection

Requests for deferrals

11. A school may request a deferral of its inspection. It may make a request to the inspection support administrator at the time when it is notified of the inspection, or to the lead inspector after the inspection has been notified. The lead inspector will consider deferral if we receive them after 4.30pm on the day the school is notified. The inspection support administrator or lead inspector must immediately make a decision and inform the school of the outcome. We will include deferrals in our monthly inspection bulletin in accordance with our policy.

12. Normally, if the school is presenting education to pupils, an inspection will go ahead in exceptional circumstances. However, an inspection might be postponed or cancelled after the school has been notified. Following a request made by the school, We will aim to make a decision about whether to defer within 5 working days of receipt. We will do this in some cases it may happen that the visit is cancelled.

13. If a school is within 8 months of confirmed closure,[footnote 5] but does not request a deferral, we will normally carry out a section 8 inspection. Inspection administrators and the regional ally will be highlight this and get advice about whether the inspection should still be carried out. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

14. In the case of unannounced inspections, any requests for a deferral will be assessed by the relevant regional director, who will decide whether the request will be granted.

During the inspection

15. On arrival at the school, each inspector will show their identity badge and ask to see a photo ID from each member of staff they intend to interview. If the school has safeguarding concerns, please report on the effectiveness of safeguarding.

16. For all other section 8 inspections, inspectors are not required to report specifically on the effectiveness of safeguarding, unless it is a specified focus of the inspection. In these cases, the judgement that will be reported in the letter where safeguarding is inadequate will be made in accordance with section 5.

17. If safeguarding is not effective or if pupils are considered to be at risk, the lead inspector will deem the inspection as a section 5 inspection (unless the school is already inadequate).

18. Alongside the handbook, inspectors should follow the guidance on inspecting safeguarding in schools and colleges, the EIF, Inspecting education in care settings, education and skills settings.

19. It is also essential that inspectors are familiar with the following guidance in relation to safeguarding:

- Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges
- Working together to safeguard children
- Disclosure and barring service (children's workforce)

20. The lead inspector is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding inspections should contact the designated lead in advance.

21. In the event of a current or ongoing incident curtailing in light during the inspection, inspectors should refer to the safeguarding in education and early years settings, which contains guidance on what to include in the inspection report.

22. When evaluating the effectiveness of a school's safeguarding arrangements, inspectors should also ask whether there have been any safeguarding incidents since the last section 5 inspection. Inspectors must report on the number and nature of incidents and of the evidence gathered.

23. On a very small number of occasions, inspectors may come across evidence of child abuse or neglect. In such cases, inspectors should immediately report the matter to the school's designated safeguard officer and discuss the evidence with them. Inspectors should also advice appropriate. Inspectors must not attempt to investigate any incident of abuse or neglect themselves. Inspectors should also report the matter, as appropriate, to the relevant local authority's children's services department. The referral will normally be made by the safeguarding lead for the school.

Providing feedback

25. At the end of all section 8 inspections, feedback will be provided to the school by the lead inspector. The feedback meeting will be chaired by the lead inspector for section 8 inspections and attendees are clear.

26. Normally, the final feedback meeting will be attended by:

- the headteacher/principal and other senior leaders, as agreed by the lead inspector and school
- the nominated schools, the chair of the school's governing body and any lead governors as possible, the clerk to governors (or equivalent), or their designee, may also attend the feedback
- for academies, including academies in multi-academy trusts, a representative of the chair of the board of trustees, and as many governors or trustees as possible. The chair of governors or trustees (or equivalent) or their designee, may also attend. take notes
- in an academy that is part of a MAT, the chief executive officer (CEO) their designee may also attend
- a representative from the school's diocesan or other governing body, if the academy sponsor.

27. During the final feedback meeting, the lead inspector will ensure that the headteacher. Those responsible for governance and all attendees are clear:

- about the judgements made
- that the main findings of the inspection and the main points provided only in the feedback meeting are provisional and subject to quality assurance
- about any recommendations for improvement
- that the grades are provisional and may be subject to change as a result of quality assurance and moderation. Inspectors will explain that the final grades will be agreed and confidential for the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school) to be made aware of with those responsible for the governance of the school, including the chair of governors or trustees (or equivalent) or their designee, who attended the provisional and subject to assurance. Information about the relevant outcomes should be shared more widely only when the school receives a copy of the inspection report.
- about the processes for making a complaint about the inspection

After the inspection

Arrangements for publishing the report [footnote 6]

28. The process for the writing, quality assurance and publication of reports from all types of inspections is outlined in the handbook mirror the EIF guidance. [footnote 7]

29. The lead inspector is responsible for writing the inspection report and submitting it for quality assurance. The report should be clear, fair, and balanced, and set out the judgements and reflect the evidence. The findings in the report should be consistent with the feedback given to the school at the end of the inspection.

30. Inspection reports will be quality assured before we send a draft to the school. In most circumstances, the school will receive the draft report within 30 working days of the last inspection activity. The school will be given 5 working days to check the factual accuracy of the draft report and to provide feedback on the inspection process, governance, and should not be shared more widely or published. We may also send the draft report to the school's governing body or trustees. This will only take place after moderation or quality assurance.

31. The school will have 5 working days to comment on the draft report, inspection administrators will then make any factual changes to the report. We will inform the school of the date that report will be published. We will also inform the school of any changes to the report.

32. If the school wishes to make a formal complaint, it has 5 working days after we have shared the final report with the school (not necessarily the same as 5 days beyond which to do so. If a complaint is not submitted, we will normally publish the report on the following day. We will inform the school of the date we intend to make publication of the report to be delayed.

33. If a section 8 inspection has been deemed as a section 5 inspection and the school's category of concern is being considered for an ongoing inspection, the Secretary of State must be informed.[footnote 8]

34. In all cases, the inspection process should not be treated as complete until all inspection activity has been carried out and the final version of the inspection report has been sent to the school.

The inspection evidence base

35. The evidence base for the inspection must be retained in line with Ofsted's retention policy. This is currently 3 years from when the report is published. We may decide that retaining it for longer is warranted for research purposes.

Quality assurance and complaints

Quality assurance

36. All inspectors are responsible for the quality of their work. The lead inspector must ensure that inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles of inspection and the code of conduct.

37. We monitor the quality of inspections through a range of formal processes and informal feedback. We will use the information we collect during inspection and feedback. We may also evaluate the quality of an inspection evidence base. The lead inspector is responsible for giving team inspectors feedback about the quality of their work and their conduct.

38. All schools are invited to take part in a stakeholder survey and we encourage them to contribute to inspection development. The link for this survey is provided with the final inspection report to the school.

Handling concerns and complaints

39. The great majority of our work is carried out smoothly and without incident. If a school has a concern about the conduct of an inspector, it should first raise the matter on-scene as possible. In order to resolve issues before the inspection is completed. Any concerns raised, and action taken, will be recorded in the inspection evidence.

40. If it is not possible to resolve concerns during the inspection, or through submitting a complaint, the school should follow our complaints procedure. If the school's complaint is about a section 8 inspection. The lead inspector will ensure that the school is informed that it is able to make a formal complaint and that information about how to complain is available on GOV.UK.

Part 2. Inspections carried out under section 8(2)

41. This section sets out in more detail the approach inspectors should take when carrying out section 8 inspections in a variety of different contexts.

Section 8 inspections of good and outstanding schools

Introduction

42. This section explains how we will carry out section 8 inspections of good and outstanding schools that have not been otherwise selected for a section inspection (see the school inspection handbook).

43. The EIF provides the inspection framework for proportionate to the performance and circumstances of schools. Schools that have not been otherwise selected for inspection receive a section 8 inspection approximately every 4 years (the first inspection after the school has been judged to be good or outstanding, and then after 4 years, the second one, then one more, and then the 5 year inspection).

44. However, some good and outstanding schools will be subject to a section 5 inspection instead of a section 8 inspection (see "Excluding schools from being exempt from routine inspections" section). This will happen, for example, when:

- the risk assessment process identifies that the quality of provision may have significantly declined
- the school has undergone significant change, such as in its size, age or through merging with another school

45. The purpose of a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school is to confirm that the school is still providing a good or outstanding education and that the effectiveness set out in the school inspection handbook.

46. In order to confirm whether the school continues to provide a good or outstanding education, inspectors will follow the guidance in chapters 3-5. They will not be expected to report on all of the areas of the EIF, but will evaluate the school's curriculum, including its particular aspects of the school's provision. These aspects will depend on the school's context, and inspectors will consider, but also include specific elements of pupils' behaviour, personal development and spending and will collect, and report on:

47. A section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school will not result in a change to the school's current category of concern. However, if the school is judged to be inadequate, it will be deemed as a section 5 inspection (see section 5 of the inspection handbook). If the school is judged to be good or outstanding, the school's current category of concern will be removed.

48. After the first inspection of a school judged to be good or outstanding, we will normally carry out further section 8 inspections of approximately 4 year intervals (the first inspection after the school has been judged to be good or outstanding, and then after 4 years, the second one, then one more, and then the 5 year inspection).[footnote 9]

Outstanding schools that were formerly exempt from routine inspections

49. Section 8 (Reg 2010) of the Regulations 2005, maintained nursery schools, academy schools and academies (subject to the exemptions in their overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection) were exempt from routine inspection. This exemption was lifted for academy converter schools[footnote 10] that were formerly exempt because the school's most recent inspection of their predecessor school was outstanding at the most recent inspection.

50. All formerly exempt schools must receive an initial inspection under section 5 or section 8 (section 5 judged). Those schools that were exempt because they were outstanding at their most recent section 5 inspection. These not otherwise selected for an initial section 8 inspection that was outstanding performance in the school's most recent section 5 inspection within the last academic year (September to August) will be subject to a section 8 inspection. Schools that were exempt because they were outstanding at their most recent section 5 inspection, but not in the last academic year (September to August) will be subject to a section 5 inspection within the last academic year (September to August).

51. It is important to notify the outstanding prepared school that the school's overall effectiveness at time of inspection under the inspection framework in place at that time. The school will be given the opportunity to provide evidence of any changes at the school since the last inspection. Changes to school leadership, governance, or have happened at any point in the period between inspections. For some schools, this will be a section 8 inspection. Inspectors will be expected to report on whether outstanding schools are continuing exempt from routine inspection.

52. As set out in the school inspection handbook, outstanding is a challenging and demanding status. Inspectors and schools must bear in mind that the school is good under that judgement, and do so accurately and conscientiously. In other words, it is not sufficient for a school to be good in most areas, but outstanding in a few specified aspects. If most areas and aspects are good criterion. In addition, the school further criteria will set under the outstanding judgement in the school inspection handbook. Inspectors will be expected to report on whether the school is still providing an outstanding education, and this exceptional performance is consistent and secure across the whole school.

Days allocated to inspection and inspection team members

53. In almost all cases, a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school will last for 2 days. However, a section 8 inspection of any good/outstanding school will last for 3 days if it is a section 5 inspection (section 5 judged) or if the school is exempt or its roll exceed for one day.

54. Regardless of number on roll, a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school will last for 2 days, given the complex nature of the provision.

55. The lead inspector will be able to fix both inspection days, unless the school is a maintained nursery school, primary, first, infant or junior school and there are fewer than 100 pupils on roll. The lead inspector will be able to fix the first day of the inspection day only.

56. If the lead inspector decides to deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection, the rest of the inspection team may be revised.

Quality of education

57. Inspectors will focus primarily on the 'quality of education' during a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. Inspectors will form a view about whether the quality of education as defined in the 'school inspection handbook' continues to be good or outstanding. In order to form a view, the lead inspector and team evaluation is about how the school's curriculum is designed, taught and assessed.

- always consider and evaluate all aspects of the area of the school's curriculum, including the degree to which the school's overall curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- consider the extent to which teachers have knowledge of the subjects they teach, present subject matter clearly, practice subject understanding systematically, and deploy effective strategies to ensure pupils' understanding
- consider the extent to which pupils, including those with SEND, develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum, and are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training
- always consider whether there is any evidence that the school's curriculum has been narrowed or pupils are being taught a narrower curriculum than they could (education and wider CEIAG impact)
- observe, where it exists, provision for 2- and 3-year-olds, and assess whether staff are supporting children's language development and early literacy, and paying attention to children's needs
- ensure that inspectors consider how well reading and early mathematics are taught in early years, Reception and Key Stage 1 in part of the school's curriculum that prepares children well for the next stages in their education. As a result, inspectors will need to consider how well pupils are taught to read, write and spell. Inspectors will need to gather evidence that follows the guidance in the school inspection handbook.

In secondary schools, inspectors will extend longer range of subjects (exemplified by the national curriculum), including Year 7 and 8. Inspectors will focus their evidence on the teaching of reading, particularly as how children gain access to the whole of the curriculum. Inspectors will also need to consider how well pupils are taught to read, including, in secondary schools, how well the school teaches pupils who are (exemplified by the national curriculum) throughout years 7 to 9, or whether the school's curriculum is narrowed or pupils are being taught a narrower curriculum the school's review of the National Curriculum, whether and what it is doing to prepare to achieve this through its key stage 4 curriculum

58. Inspectors will gather evidence about the implementation of the curriculum so that they can form a view about the degree with which senior leaders follow the curriculum intent, and how well it is being taught. Inspectors will also need to form a view about how well equipped and skilled the teachers in the school are to teach the curriculum, including how well they are supported to do so.

59. If the school is not performing well against these criteria, this could be considered evidence that the school is not longer receive all aspect but is current grade 2 section 8 inspection were carried out. If the lead inspector has serious concerns about the quality of education, or if the school is not providing a good or outstanding education, inspectors will discuss the concerns with the lead inspector and consider the school inspection handbook. This is to recognise that not all schools will have had the opportunity to establish or construct their curriculum.

Inspectors will not look at internal progress or attainment data

60. Inspectors will not look at internal progress or attainment data, or school pupil analysis and progress and attainment data in the EIF. They will not expect school staff to set their understanding of pupils' educational performance. However, inspectors may ask school leaders how they use assessment information to inform their decisions, support pupils, and inform their curriculum.

61. Inspectors will gather evidence about the broad together from a combination of inspection activities. No one piece of evidence or data on its own is sufficient to make an assessment of quality.

Behaviour

62. Inspectors will not make judgements on all the criteria contained in the 'behaviour and attitudes' judgement. Nevertheless, they will consider if they factors:

- whether the school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct and how well these are communicated to pupils and other members of the school community, whether this is reflected in pupils' behaviour and conduct. Inspectors will consider whether staff notice and challenge poor behaviour appropriately
- whether staff model pupils and how well pupils behave appropriately and how well they work with learning and effectively and are not allowed to disrupt learning

63. Where behaviour is not being managed well, this could be evidence that the school would no longer receive at least its current grade if a section 8 inspection were carried out. Inspectors will form a view on the school's current conduct and behaviour. The inspection team will be deemed as a section 5 inspection.

Gaming and off-rolling

64. When carrying out these inspection activities, inspectors will be particularly alert to any evidence that suggests that the school may:

- gaming – entering qualifications for qualifications that are not in their educational best interest in order to achieve apparently better performance for the school
- off-rolling – removing pupils from the school's roll without a lawful basis, or persuaded inclusion when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil. Please refer to the school inspection handbook for more information.

65. Where inspectors uncover any evidence that gaming or off-rolling has taken place, this could be evidence that the school would no longer receive at least its current grade if a section 8 inspection were carried out. Inspectors will form a view on the school's current gaming or off-rolling. The inspection will be deemed as a section 5 inspection.

Pupils' wider development

66. Inspectors will consider the extent to which the curriculum goes beyond the academic and vocational to develop pupils' character, including their resilience, leadership, broader development and whether the school's curriculum is enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in a high quality.

67. Inspectors will expect schools to ensure that sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence are happening in and around the school, and when these are happening, that the school is doing all it can to minimise the risk of pupils experiencing online sexual abuse and sexual violence through vehicle school personnel from accessing an effective behaviour policy with appropriate sanctions, pastoral support and a well-implemented curriculum. Inspectors will also consider curriculum that addresses adolescents issues of concern.

68. Inspectors will review and assess the school's approach to careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) and how it fits into the school's curriculum. Inspectors will consider the school's compliance with the statutory requirements in respect of CIAG. Inspectors will visit this in the inspection report.

69. Where court orders have been issued for pupils to be educated elsewhere, inspectors will look at whether the school has been innovative approaches to providing a rich range of provision development opportunities for pupils, including those who are at risk of NEET.

70. Inspectors will note how a government or the criteria contained in the 'personal development' judgement.

Workload

71. Inspectors will consider the extent to which leaders engage with staff and are aware of their workload and how well they manage workload, including their workload and contributing. They will consider the extent to which staff are free from bullying and harassment, and how well they are supported to do so. Inspectors will also consider the extent to which school leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of their

burdens.

72. We understand that assessment arrangements may have been altered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors will seek to understand how staff are supported and the steps that are being taken to remove the risk of additional workload.

73. If these issues are not being managed well, this could be considered as evidence that the school would no longer receive at least its current grade if a section 5 inspection were carried out. Where the lead inspector has serious concerns about workload or the bullying or harassment of staff, the inspection will be deemed as a section 5 inspection.

Safeguarding

74. All schools should have a good culture of safeguarding. This means that they should have effective arrangements to:

- always act in the best interests of pupils to protect them online and offline
- identify pupils who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation
- secure the help that pupils need, and, if required, refer pupils in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help
- manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children, pupils, students and vulnerable adults

75. Inspectors will not grade this key aspect of a school's work. However, inspectors will always make a written judgement in the report about whether the arrangements for safeguarding children and pupils are effective.

76. Inspectors must go beyond simply reviewing documents in order to evaluate the safeguarding culture of the school.

77. In addition to understanding Ofsted's inspecting safeguarding policies, inspectors should be familiar with relevant, including statutory, guidance in relation to safeguarding:

- 'Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges' (all parts)
- 'Working together to safeguard children'
- 'Positive environments where children can flourish'

78. For a full explanation of the methodology inspectors will adopt in relation to safeguarding, see the school inspection handbook.

Methodology for gathering evidence

79. Inspectors will normally adopt the same methodology for inspecting the quality of education and safeguarding as that used on a section 5 inspection. However, in all other areas they will not gather the same depth of evidence on a section 8 inspection as a full team carrying out a section 5 inspection, as this would not be possible.

80. For a full explanation of the methodology inspectors will adopt, see the school inspection handbook.

Potential inspection outcomes

81. There are 4 possible outcomes for a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school.

- Outcome 1 – the school continues to be a good/outstanding school. This is the most common outcome
- Outcome 2 – the school was previously judged to be good and it remains so and there is sufficient evidence of improved performance to suggest that it might be judged outstanding if it received a section 5 inspection at the time of the section 8 inspection. The school will be informed that its next inspection will be a section 5 inspection, which will typically take place within 1 to 2 years of the publication of the section 8 inspection report
- Outcome 3 – the lead inspector is not satisfied that the school would receive at least its current grade if a section 5 inspection were carried out at the time of the section 8 inspection. The school will be informed that its next inspection will be a section 5 inspection within the statutory timeframe, which will typically take place within 1 to 2 years of the publication of the section 8 inspection report, depending on how near to the end of the statutory timeframe the section 8 inspection has taken place
- Outcome 4 – the lead inspector has gathered evidence that suggests that the good or outstanding school may now be inadequate in one or more of the graded judgements under a section 5 inspection, and there are serious concerns about the quality of education, pupils' behaviour or safeguarding. The section 8 inspection will usually be deemed as a section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours. Alternatively, for outstanding schools only, there are concerns that the performance of the school could be declining to 'requires improvement'. Again, the section 8 inspection will usually be deemed as a section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours

82. Inspectors will always report on whether safeguarding is effective. If there is evidence that safeguarding may be ineffective, the lead inspector will always deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection.

Schools that remain good/outstanding (outcome 1)

83. Where the lead inspector judges that a school remains good/outstanding, they will confirm this judgement in the final feedback to the school at the end of the section 8 inspection. The lead inspector will notify their Ofsted regional support team as soon as this decision is made. If inspectors find the school to be good because of transitional arrangements, this should be stated in the report.

Schools that remain good, with marked improvement (outcome 2)

84. Where the lead inspector considers that, based on the evidence seen, a school remains good and inspectors have reason to believe that the quality of education might be better than good if it received a section 5 inspection at the time of the section 8 inspection, the lead inspector will indicate that this is likely to be their conclusion (subject to quality assurance of the inspection). The lead inspector will then discuss with the school which topics or areas of provision may usefully serve as the focus of a subsequent section 5 inspection, and record this in their evidence.

85. The school will then receive a report that makes clear that its next inspection will be carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The report will confirm that the school remains good and will highlight the reasons why inspectors believe that the quality of education is better than good.

86. The section 5 inspection will usually take place within 1 to 2 years after the publication of the section 8 inspection report, giving the school time for the strong practice and marked improvements to be consolidated. The decision on the timing of the full section 5 inspection will be for the relevant Ofsted regional director to determine. Schools may request an early inspection and these requests will be considered by the relevant Ofsted region.

Schools that may no longer be good/outstanding (outcome 3)

87. Where the lead inspector is not satisfied that the school would receive its current grade if a section 5 inspection were carried out at the time of the section 8 inspection, the lead inspector will indicate that this is likely to be their conclusion (subject to quality assurance of the inspection). The lead inspector will then discuss with the school which subjects, themes or areas of a school's work may usefully serve as the focus of a subsequent section 5 inspection, and record this in their evidence.

88. The school will then receive a letter setting out what the school is doing well and what it needs to improve. The school's current overall effectiveness judgement will not change as a result of this inspection. The school will subsequently receive a section 5 inspection within the prescribed statutory timeframe.[footnote 8]

89. In line with regulations, the prescribed timeframe will not be reset by the section 8 inspection because the essential test of those regulations has not been met.[footnote 9] The section 5 inspection will typically take place within 1 to 2 years of the publication of the section 8 inspection report, although this could be sooner if the section 8 inspection has been carried out nearer to the end of the statutory timeframe.

90. For outcomes 2 and 3, if a maintained school converts to become an academy before the section 5 inspection has been carried out, the school's first inspection as an academy will be a section 5 inspection at least one year after the school becomes an academy.

Section 8 inspection is deemed as a section 5 inspection (outcome 4)

91. The section 8 inspection will be deemed as a section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours, if there are serious concerns about the quality of education, behaviour, potential gaming (including off-rolling) or safeguarding. This will occur if inspectors:

- find evidence that suggests that the 'quality of education' might be judged to be inadequate were a full section 5 inspection to take place at the time of the section 8 inspection. This may include a situation where the range of subjects being taught is very narrow (taking any COVID-19 catch up factors into consideration)
- find evidence relating to behaviour that suggests that 'behaviour and attitudes' might be judged to be inadequate were a full section 5 inspection to be taking place at the time of the section 8 inspection[footnote 10]
- find evidence that suggests that the school has removed pupils from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion, or encouraged parents to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil
- find evidence that deliberate gaming is taking place
- find evidence indicating that safeguarding may be ineffective

92. The section 8 inspection will also be deemed as a section 5 inspection when the lead inspector has gathered evidence that suggests the school may be inadequate in one or more of the graded judgements were a section 5 inspection carried out at the time of the section 8 inspection.[footnote 11]

93. A decision to deem the inspection as a section 5 inspection does not predetermine the outcome of the section 5 inspection. At the end of the section 5 inspection, the school may receive any grade along the 4-point grading scale.

94. If inspectors gather evidence that suggests an outstanding school's performance may have declined so that, were a section 5 inspection to be carried out at the time of the section 8 inspection, the school would be likely to be judged as requires improvement, inspectors will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours.

95. Where the section 8 inspection is HMI-led and is deemed as a section 5 inspection, the HMI will remain the lead inspector for the full inspection. However, where the section 8 inspection has been led by an OI, the OI may either remain as the lead inspector for the full inspection or an HMI may lead the full inspection. More inspectors may join the lead inspector. The section 8 inspection will become a section 5 inspection and the team will gather and evaluate evidence in order to make a full set of graded judgements.

96. A section 8 inspection report will not be produced when the section 8 inspection is deemed as a section 5 inspection. Instead, the school will receive a section 5 inspection report.

Principles for working with the headteacher, senior leaders and governors

97. Section 8 inspections of good and outstanding schools are designed to promote constructive, challenging, professional dialogue between the lead inspector and school leaders. The lead inspector will start the section 8 inspection on the assumption that the school remains good/outstanding. They will test this over the course of the inspection through their inspection activities and ongoing discussion with leaders and governors.

98. Section 8 inspections provide schools with the opportunity to share with the lead inspector how they are sustaining and continuing to improve the overall good quality of education for pupils. Section 8 inspections also provide leaders and governors with the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity for driving further improvement in their school. The lead inspector will test whether leaders and governors have identified weaknesses or areas needing development at the school.

99. The lead inspector will plan the inspection so that leaders and governors have time to present evidence about key improvements at the school, their assessment of the current performance of the school and action planning that supports improvement. During the pre-inspection call between the lead inspector and the headteacher and/or other senior leaders, school leaders will summarise their evaluation of the school's current performance and the lead inspector will discuss the key issues to be considered during the inspection. They will include these issues in the schedule for the inspection.

100. Leaders and governors are not required to:

- prepare documentary evidence that is in addition to any standard documents or policies that they use for the normal day-to-day business of the school
- prepare a self-evaluation or equivalent in a specified format or with any specific wording. Any assessment that they provide should be part of the school's usual evaluation work and not be generated solely for inspection purposes

Seeking the views of registered parents, pupils and other stakeholders

101. When a school is notified of the section 8 inspection, leaders and those responsible for governance should take steps that are reasonably practicable to inform all registered parents of registered pupils at the school, including those who are on fixed-term or internal exclusion, those who attend alternative provision or those who are away from school. Schools should also be invited to notify relevant bodies of the inspection, including providers of alternative provision.

102. The views of staff and pupils in schools will usually be gathered through an online questionnaire. The inspection support administrator sends online links to the school along with the formal notification of inspection. The school is asked to encourage staff and pupils to complete the online questionnaire, with the exception of those in any boarding provision (whose views will have already been sought through the point-in-time survey). Staff and pupils should complete and submit their questionnaires by 3pm on the first[footnote 12] day of the inspection.

103. Our email confirming the inspection includes a letter that can be used to notify parents formally. It explains how to use Ofsted Parent View and how parents can contact inspectors. Schools should actively encourage parents to complete Ofsted Parent View as early as possible by placing a link on their website to the Ofsted Parent View website. Inspectors should encourage the school to notify parents using its own systems (such as text messages) where these are available.

104. The lead inspector will review the evidence from Ofsted Parent View throughout the section 8 inspection to ensure that all online responses received during the inspection are taken into account. If the response rate for Ofsted Parent View is low, inspectors may take further steps during the inspection to gather parents' views.

105. The lead inspector will also take into account any other evidence from parents, including the results of any past surveys that the school has carried out or commissioned. If individual parents raise serious issues, inspectors should follow these up with the school and record its response as part of the evidence gathered during the inspection. Inspectors will not investigate complaints.

Before the inspection

Notification and introduction

106. For maintained schools and academies (including PRUs, special schools and maintained nursery schools), Ofsted will normally contact the school by telephone to announce the inspection between 10.30am and 2pm on the school day before the section 8 inspection.

107. Requests for a deferral will be handled in accordance with our deferral policy. During a notification call, if the headteacher is unavailable, we will ask to speak to the next most senior member of staff. Once it has been confirmed that the section 8 inspection will take place, we will send confirmation to the school by email.

Information that schools must provide by 8am on the first day of inspection

108. The inspection support administrator will also send the school a note requesting that the following information is available to inspectors by 8am the next day, at the formal start of the inspection:

- the school timetable, current staff list (indicating early career teachers (ECTs)) and times of the school day
- any information about previously planned interruptions to normal school routines during the inspection
- records and analysis of exclusions, pupils taken off roll, incidents of poor behaviour and any use of internal isolation
- records and analysis of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence
- records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying, use of derogatory language and racist incidents
- a list of referrals made to the designated person for safeguarding in the school and those that were subsequently referred to the local authority, along with brief details of the resolution
- a list of all pupils who have open cases with children's services/social care and for whom there is a multi-agency plan
- up-to-date attendance analysis for all groups of pupils
- documented evidence of the work of those responsible for governance and their priorities, including any written scheme of delegation for an academy in a MAT
- a summary of any school self-evaluation or equivalent
- the current school improvement plan or equivalent, including any planning that sets out the longer-term vision for the school, such as the school or the trust's strategy
- any reports from external evaluation of the school

Preparation

109. Once we have informed the school of the inspection, the lead inspector will contact the school by telephone and ask to speak to the headteacher. Inspectors' preparatory telephone conversations with headteachers will have 2 elements:

- a reflective, educationally focused conversation about the school's context and challenges and progress made since the last inspection, including how COVID-19 has affected this
- a shorter inspection planning conversation that focuses on practical and logistical issues, including how the inspection team will work within the school's COVID-19 protective measures

110. It may be that both these elements are discussed in a single telephone conversation. Alternatively, they may be carried out as 2 separate conversations with a break in-between as mutually agreed by the lead inspector and the headteacher. In total, these conversations are likely to last around 90 minutes.

Discussing the school's progress since the last inspection

111. We recognise that responding to COVID-19 has placed great demands on school leaders and may have disrupted a school's development plans.

112. Inspectors will hold an introductory telephone conversation with school leaders on the day before the inspection begins. Inspectors should give school leaders the opportunity to explain their school's specific context and challenges. Inspection experience, shows that this helps both leaders and inspectors build stronger professional relationships.

113. Inspectors will use this conversation to understand:

- the school's context, and the progress it has made since the previous inspection, including any specific progress made in areas for improvement that were identified at previous inspections and that remain relevant under the current inspection framework
- the headteacher's assessment of the school's current strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to the curriculum, the way teaching supports pupils to learn the curriculum, the standards pupils achieve, pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and the personal development of pupils
- the specific areas of the school that will be focused on during inspection

114. This conversation will normally last up to 90 minutes. It may be longer where detailed discussions of the COVID-19 context are required. It will help inspectors to form an initial understanding of the leaders' view of the school's progress and also help them to shape the inspection plan. Our experience from piloting the EIF shows that this is the part of preparation that school leaders and inspectors often find to be the most helpful and constructive.

Inspection planning discussion

115. This discussion will be short and focused on practical issues. The lead inspector will:

- make the school aware of its statutory duty to inform parents of the inspection and that Ofsted Parent View is the main method for gathering the views of parents at the point of inspection. Inspectors will remind the school that Ofsted's letter to parents containing the link to Ofsted Parent View may be sent electronically, or as a paper copy via pupils
- discuss the nature of any SEND resource base, where applicable
- establish whether the school has any pupils who attend off-site alternative provision, either full time or part time. Inspectors must ask the school about the registration status of any alternative providers that they use. Any provider of alternative provision must be registered as an independent school if it caters full time for 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age, or one pupil of compulsory school age who is looked after or has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Where a school uses alternative provision that should be registered but is not, inspectors will carefully consider whether pupils at this provision are effectively safeguarded and may decide to deem the inspection as a section 5 inspection
- visit alternative providers during the inspection as directed by the relevant Ofsted region. Any alternative provision site that has not yet been inspected should be visited during the inspection
- discuss any off-site units that cater for pupils with behaviour or attendance difficulties, run either by the school or in partnership with other schools
- discuss any nursery provision, before- and/or after-school care or holiday clubs led and managed directly by the school, particularly where these take 2- to 8-year-olds (see 'Registering school-based childcare provision'
- invite the headteacher, curriculum leaders and other leaders to take part in joint visits to lessons and to observe the main inspection team meetings, as restrictions allow. These meetings may include a virtual option using video/telephone calls if necessary
- make arrangements for meetings with relevant staff
- provide an opportunity for the school to ask any questions or to raise any concerns, for example perceived conflicts of interest

116. The lead inspector will also request the school to provide certain information as early as possible to aid preparation. This will include:

- the single central record for the school
- records and analysis of sexual harassment or sexual violence
- records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including sexist, ableist or homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying, use of derogatory language and racist incidents
- a list of staff and a note of whether any relevant staff are absent
- a copy of the school timetable
- whether any teachers cannot be observed for any reason (for example, where they are subject to capability procedures)
- whether there is anyone working on site who is normally employed elsewhere in the MAT (where relevant)
- maps and other practical information (see resource bases below)
- access to the school's wifi, where it exists, so that inspectors can connect to the internet

117. It is important that inspectors speak to those responsible for leadership and governance during the inspection. Since schools, and especially MATs, operate a wide variety of leadership and governance models, it is essential that inspectors establish who is responsible for leadership and governance. The lead inspector will therefore:

- establish what the governance structure of the school or academy is, with reference to the range of functions delegated to local governing bodies or other committees[footnote 13]
- confirm arrangements for meetings with the school and, where appropriate, MAT executive leaders, as well as representatives of those responsible for the governance of the school and anyone else they think is relevant. The lead inspector should be guided by the school on who they need to meet from a MAT
- make arrangements for a meeting with the chair of the governing body or, where appropriate, the chair of the board of trustees and as many governors/trustees as possible. Inspectors will also ask the school to invite as many governors/trustees as possible to attend the final feedback meeting, as restrictions allow. These meetings may include a virtual option using video/telephone calls if necessary
- request either a face-to-face meeting or a telephone call with a representative from the local authority, diocese, sponsor or other relevant responsible body as appropriate
- request that a representative from the local authority, diocese, MAT, sponsor or other relevant responsible body is present at the final inspection feedback meeting as appropriate

118. If any issues arise, the lead inspector may also need further clarification from the school, for example where information is not available on the school's website.

Further inspection preparation carried out by the lead inspector

119. In addition to the information requested from the school, inspectors will review and consider the following information:

- all relevant information held by Ofsted, including:
  - inspection reports on the school
  - any surveys or monitoring letters
  - any complaints made about the school to Ofsted[footnote 14]
  - replies to questionnaires
  - our inspection data summary report (IDSR)
  - information on our provider information portal,[footnote 15] including any warning notices[footnote 16]
  - the most recent inspection report on the relevant local authority's children's services[footnote 17]
  - the main findings from the relevant local area's SEND inspection[footnote 18]
- relevant publicly available information, such as the school's website[footnote 19]
- information published by local authorities, the DfE (including the Education and Skills Funding Agency and regional school commissioners) and the police

Resource bases

120. If the school has a SEND resource base delegated to it or the local authority maintains direct responsibility for the period when the pupils in the provision are in mainstream classes at the school being inspected, the resource base must be inspected. Inspectors must consider evidence about the resourced provision when making judgements about the school overall.

121. During the lead inspector's planning conversation with the school, they will obtain specific information about any resource base, including:

- the number of pupils and the range of the needs of pupils placed in additionally resourced provision, together with pupils' timetables, including when they are taught in mainstream classes (with and without support) and when they receive specialist support in separate resourced provision
- the type(s) of language/communication systems used. If the specialist provision is for deaf pupils, it is important to establish, where British sign language is used, whether a British sign language interpreter will be provided by the school when inspectors are meeting with the pupils. The lead inspector will contact the inspection support administrator as soon as possible if this support is needed. Details will be available in the team room
- staffing arrangements and details of any outreach services provided by the resourced provision

During the inspection

Typical inspection day

122. The lead inspector will devise a timetable for the section 8 inspection based on their pre-inspection analysis and conversations with school leaders. This timetable may be adapted as new evidence becomes available or other issues emerge.

123. Inspectors must always judge whether the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. As part of assessing safeguarding, inspectors will consider how the school handles allegations and instances of sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence.

124. The section 8 inspection will also focus on evidence of how effectively the school's leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, are:

- sustaining a good quality of education for pupils
- demonstrating capacity to remedy any weaknesses that are not of sufficient concern for the lead inspector to deem the inspection as a section 5 inspection

Feedback at the end of the section 8 inspection

125. At the end of the section 8 inspection, the lead inspector will provide brief oral feedback that will typically:

- report the range of evidence gathered
- provide the school with a judgement about whether it remains good or outstanding (as relevant)
- report whether safeguarding is effective
- make clear that the text of the section 8 inspection report will differ from the oral feedback as the feedback is for the school and the report is written for parents
- ensure that leaders are clear about the procedures for publishing the report

After the inspection

Reporting on the section 8 inspection

126. The school will receive a report setting out the inspection findings that will be published on the Ofsted reports website. Schools should inform parents that this report has been published.

Monitoring inspections for schools judged 'requires improvement'

127. This section of the handbook sets out Ofsted's approach to challenging and supporting schools that are judged as requires improvement at their last section 5 inspection. The guidance outlines the main activities that may be undertaken by the lead inspector when carrying out a monitoring inspection of a school judged as requires improvement until it is re-inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

128. Schools judged as requires improvement will usually be re-inspected under section 5 within 30 months after the publication of the section 5 report (for the first inspection after the pandemic, this period will be extended by up to 6 terms). The timing of the re-inspection will be at the discretion of Ofsted's relevant regional director.[footnote 20]

129. Although not in a formal category of concern, schools judged as requires improvement may be subject to monitoring. This will not normally apply to a school that has been judged as requires improvement for the first time. However, a school that receives 2 or more successive 'overall effectiveness' judgements of requires improvement will normally be monitored for between 12 and 30 months following publication of the report which resulted in the most recent 'requires improvement' judgement (for the first inspection after the pandemic, this period will be extended by up to 6 terms).

130. Where a school's most recent 'leadership and management' judgement was good, or where leadership has changed since the last section 5 inspection, the relevant regional director may decide that a school that would otherwise have had a monitoring inspection does not require one. However, these decisions will be by exception, having taken account of all relevant information about the current position in the school. If made, this decision should be recorded for audit trail.

131. Where, following a monitoring inspection, the lead inspector considers that a school is ready for re-inspection because it has made good progress, they may recommend that the next section 5 inspection is brought forward. Conversely, when the lead inspector feels that the school would benefit from further time to improve to a judgement of good, they may recommend that the school is re-inspected later in the 30-month inspection window.

132. If, at the section 5 re-inspection, the school has not demonstrated that it has improved to good, the lead inspector will need to consider whether the school continues to require improvement or whether it is inadequate. If the school has demonstrated improvement in some areas and there is a general upward trend, but key aspects of performance remain less than good, it may be judged as requires improvement again. In these cases, there may be monitoring before another section 5 inspection takes place, which would normally be within 30 months after the publication of the previous section 5 report (for the first inspection after the pandemic, this period

Before the inspection

Staffing

103. Ofsted normally carry out the monitoring inspection, which lasts one day. On occasion, an HI may lead the monitoring inspection.

104. Ofsted will normally inform the school of the inspection by telephone, considered in advance of the inspection, but will not provide more than 48 hours for social care in the relevant inspection.[footnote 27]

During the first monitoring inspection

105. Schools subject to inspection improvement are not required to prepare a separate action plan, but are expected to amend their existing plans to address the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection.

106. Ofsted will normally hold a meeting at the monitoring inspection by reviewing the information that Ofsted requires the school/provider to make ready before and/or at the start of the inspection, which may include:

- the previous section 5 inspection report, paying particular attention to the areas of recommendation for her improvement
- the school's improvement plan following the section 5 inspection
- information from School Parent View
- a summary of any self-evaluation or equivalent the school has completed, as well as the evidence that supports the school's information about its current performance
- information about the curriculum on the school's website
- any complaints made about the school to Ofsted since the last inspection
- information on our provider information portal, including any warning notices and prosecutions

107. During the monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will ask the leadership teams that appear to be providing the school/provider from progressing to good. The lead inspector will also ask the leadership teams of the school/provider to provide evidence which inform the inspection lead (and Ofsted), and will assist the inspector team and the schools by email.

108. During the initial telephone call with the school, the lead inspector will:

- confirm the date of the inspection
- explain the purpose of the monitoring inspection
- confirm that the school will inform the governing body and the local authority/proprietor (such as relevant) and that the lead inspector will wish to speak to them during the inspection.[footnote 28]
- provide the opportunity to discuss any specific issues that the lead inspector should be made aware of before arriving to the monitoring inspection (if any)

109. During this conversation, the lead inspector will discuss with the leadership teams aspects of the quality of education are improving. They will agree the approach to evidence, which will be based on the school's improvement plan. This may include, including quality of teaching, staff, reviewing documentation, monitoring pupils' work, and lesson visits. The lead inspector and headteacher will also agree inspection activities, including meetings with senior and middle leaders, and how the school leaders have been working on, for example alternatives or behaviour.

During the inspection

Focus of the monitoring inspection

110. The monitoring inspection will focus on:

- assessing what actions and/or lines responsible for governance whether the fundamental actions needed to improve the school are being taken quickly and effectively. This will include assessing whether or not the school has identified the prioritised actions or any gaps, whether their diagnosis of the curriculum, their teaching, especially in terms of pupils being able to track following COVID-19 disruption, and their use of assessment to inform teaching, and whether governing actions to ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education, and whether they are building or adapting an effective curriculum, including remedial actions for pupils who need it
- conducting the subject of the support provided to the school, and how it is being and challenged provided by any external partners or school improvement partnership and how it is leading partners to progress towards becoming a good or outstanding school
- reviewing the impact of any support to the school on its improvement
- determining the extent of progress that has been made over time since the school was first judged to require improvement
- where appropriate, recommending whether or not the school is ready for a section 5 inspection

Monitoring inspection activities

111. During the inspection visit with the school, the lead inspector will discuss the inspection activities needed to gather evidence of the impact of leaders', managers' and governors' actions to improve the quality of education, as well as the extent to which has been made since the inspection, and over time.

112. While the lead inspector will consider the progress made in implementing the school's action plan and the impact of leaders', managers' and governors' actions, lead inspectors are not setting simple to evaluate action plans, but to challenge and support the school to ensure that they are focusing on the right things and making the most of the improvement and impact of their actions. Inspectors will also draw on the evidence and the necessary improvements swiftly and sustainably.

113. The lead inspector will also consider the school improvement plan(s) of the provision which is being inspected and the extent to which it addresses specific aspects of inspection weaknesses. In evaluating the progress that the school is making to address these areas for improvement, the lead inspector will take into account the school's context and the school inspection handbook. Inspectors will also draw on the inspection methodology set out in the handbook in order to support them to form a view of this impact.

114. During the monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will:

- meet the headteacher and other senior leaders (including, where appropriate, the CEO of the MAT/their delegate or equivalent) to establish a purposeful and collaborative relationship, and to discuss the school's improvement. It is also for us to tackle issues from the section 5 inspection
- hold meetings with representatives of the local authority/proprietor body, the chair of governing body, the school improvement partnership, the MAT or academy trust/sponsor, Sustainable and Local Education Partnership, and other bodies/ groups to gather any other evidence needed. This may include discussions with staff and pupils, and should include a meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views and pupils' behaviour, and how pupils support their and their progress
- consider views expressed on Ofsted Parent View. Where possible, inspectors will talk informally to a group of parents
- discuss with the headteacher the next steps
- plan time to reflect on and summarise the evidence, draft the monitoring report and consider what, if any, further challenge or support is needed

Arriving at final judgements

115. At the end of the monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will make a single judgement on the overall progress:

- Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school
- or

- Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school

At the end of the inspection

Final feedback

116. The lead inspector will hold a feedback meeting with key stakeholders, including as many governor representatives as possible, at the end of the monitoring inspection. This will normally be on the day of the inspection. If the inspection is of a school, the lead inspector will expect to speak to the governing body/trustees, proprietor, or as many governors/trustees as possible. If needed, they will arrange to do this by phone. The lead inspector will also expect to speak to the local authority or equivalent (LA/MAT) for the final feedback meeting, as appropriate. These meetings may include a virtual option using video/telephone calls if necessary.

117. Where the lead inspector has concerns about the school, the effectiveness of leadership and/or governance or the sort of progress with which governors are being informed, the lead inspector will offer to meet with governors before the feedback meeting to discuss their concerns.

118. If a monitoring inspection identifies serious concerns about aspects of the school's provision, the lead inspector will discuss with the school and LA/MAT the need for another monitoring visit, that could be required for us and may lead to the next inspection being brought forward.

119. In exceptional circumstances, where the concerns are such that the school requires immediate inspection under section 5, the section 8 inspection may be converted to a section 5 inspection. This will only be done if the lead inspector finds that the school's performance appears to be improving. We may also recommend inspection under section 5 inspection, usually within 6 weeks.[footnote 29] The section 5 inspection will normally be led by the section 8 inspector who will be leads and a section 5 inspector team will be conducted. Where necessary, more inspectors may be added to the inspection team.

Reporting on the monitoring inspection

153. The monitoring report letter which is written at the end of the monitoring inspection will include:

- the date of the inspection
- a summary of the type of evidence gathered during the inspection and the context of the school
- the judgement on whether the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection have been addressed
- the reasons, special impact of the work being carried out since the school visited since the section 5 inspection, with particular reference to the inspection judgements, the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, leadership and the effectiveness of school leadership, management and governance
- a judgement on the effectiveness of the action taken and the progress made by the school since the section 5 inspection
- the suitability of the school's plans to tackle the areas requiring improvement which were identified at the recent inspection and any recommendations from a previous monitoring inspection
- an evaluation of whether leaders and those responsible for governance are being effective at ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education, and particularly whether they are focusing on the right things and making
- any additional priorities for improvement arising from the monitoring inspection

Monitoring inspections for schools judged inadequate

154. Schools that are judged inadequate fall into one of 2 categories, both of which are formally added to inadequate as categories of concern:

- special measures
- or

- serious weaknesses (defined in law as 'requires significant improvement')

155. These terms are defined in Section 5 handbook 1 'Schools causing concern' section.

156. Maintained schools and PRUs that are judged to be causing concern will be subject to monitoring inspections. Academies and PRUs that are judged inadequate and maintained schools judged to have serious weaknesses ('requiring improvement') will be subject to monitoring inspections. Academies and PRUs judged to have serious weaknesses or special schools, but academies maintained nursery schools and non-maintained special schools judged inadequate will not be subject to monitoring inspections. Instead, the leadership and governance inspection will be conducted and the school will be 'relocated' to another trust.

157. Maintained schools or PRUs that have been issued with an academy order and academies that are being brokered or 'relocated' to new sponsors following termination of their previous sponsorship will be subject to monitoring inspections. Schools that have been brokered or 'relocated' after 9 months.

158. Academies judged to have serious weaknesses and which are not brokered or 'relocated' will be subject to monitoring inspections. The first inspection is expected within 30 months of the publication of the inspection report in which they were judged to have serious weaknesses. Academies that are judged to have serious weaknesses will be subsequently up to 6 terms.

159. Academies judged to require special measures and which are not 'relocated', will be subject to monitoring inspections. The timing of the next section 5 inspection is determined by the academy's rate of improvement. However, it will normally take place within 2 terms of the academy being judged to require special measures. We will consider exceptions (for the first inspection after the academy has been open) on a case-by-case basis.

160. Academies judged to have serious weaknesses and which are not brokered or 'relocated' will be subject to monitoring inspections. The first inspection is expected within 30 months of the publication of the inspection report in which they were judged to have serious weaknesses. Academies that are judged to have serious weaknesses will be subsequently up to 6 terms.

161. Academies judged to require special measures and which are not 'relocated', will be subject to monitoring inspections. The timing of the next section 5 inspection is determined by the academy's rate of improvement. However, it will normally take place within 2 terms of the academy being judged to require special measures. We will consider exceptions (for the first inspection after the academy has been open) on a case-by-case basis.

162. Once an inadequate maintained school or PRU has become a sponsored academy, the section 5 inspection will be conducted as a section 5 inspection of a sponsored academy. It will be treated as a new school, with its first inspection being a section 5 inspection. This will usually take place during the third year of operation.[footnote 30] If a school has been judged inadequate and has been brokered or 'relocated' to a new trust, being 'relocated' this sponsorship is a new trust. Ofsted may instead choose to schedule a section 5 inspection sooner than the 3 years.

Appointment of early career teachers

163. With regard to the appointment of ECTs in maintained schools and PRUs, monitoring inspections of schools judged inadequate, or schools that are judged to serious weaknesses, the school is not required to appoint special measures, which PRUs are given permission in writing.

164. Where the lead inspector, at the latest section 5 inspection has informed a school that it may not appoint ECTs, and the monitoring inspections are taking place, the lead inspector will inform the school that it may now appoint ECTs, provided that the LA/MAT confirms in writing to the school, that it is satisfied that the school is ready to appoint ECTs, does not extend to trainee teachers on employment based teaching programmes.

Exceptions to routine monitoring of inadequate schools

165. Maintained schools or PRUs that have been issued with an academy order and academies that are being brokered or 'relocated' to new sponsors will be exempt from the routine monitoring arrangements for a period of 3 terms.

166. There is still a requirement for the local authority, proprietor or trust to prepare a statement of action, even though the school is not yet subject to monitoring inspections, since the new funding agreements are in place. However, with the exception of any safeguarding issues, the local authority, proprietor or trust should be aware that the statement should be in place and that the relevant local authority and the school are facilitate the transition to the new academy.

168. In the case of schools where serious safeguarding concerns have been identified, it is essential that early action is taken to ensure that pupils are safe. Ofsted may, in some cases, carry out a section 8 inspection of such a school, or a section 5 inspection, within 2 months of the school being made a new academy, with its first inspection being a section 5 inspection. This will usually take place during the third year of operation.[footnote 31] If a school has been judged inadequate and has been brokered or 'relocated' to a new trust, being 'relocated' this sponsorship is a new trust. Ofsted may instead choose to schedule a section 5 inspection sooner than the 3 years.

Notification

169. The lead inspector will telephone the school the day before the start of the section monitoring inspection.[footnote 32] If the headteacher is unavailable, the lead inspector should ask to speak to the next senior member of staff and explain the circumstances of the section 5 inspection.

170. In academies that are part of a MAT, the lead inspector should also arrange to speak to the relevant senior officer responsible for overseeing the inspection where these roles are part of the structure.[footnote 33]

162. The lead inspector should seek to ensure that the headteacher will be present on the first day of inspection. If the headteacher is absent, the lead inspector should inform the inspection team lead (or Ofsted), who will work from home and inform the schools by email.

171. During the initial telephone call with the school, the lead inspector will:

- confirm the date of the inspection
- explain the purpose of the monitoring inspection
- confirm that the school will inform the governing body and the local authority/proprietor (such as relevant) and that the lead inspector will wish to speak to them during the inspection.[footnote 34]
- provide the opportunity to discuss any specific issues that the lead inspector should be made aware of before arriving to the monitoring inspection (if any)

172. During this conversation, the lead inspector will discuss with the headteacher how the school is ready for the monitoring inspection. This will include discussing the curriculum and inspection activities that can not our leaders' assessment, including, include: lesson by pupils, meeting staff, reviewing documentation, reviewing pupil's work, and lesson visits. The lead inspector and headteacher will also agree inspection activities, including meetings with senior and middle leaders and how the school leaders have been working on, for example alternatives or behaviour.

During the inspection

Focus of the monitoring inspection

174. The monitoring inspection will focus on:

- assessing what actions and/or lines responsible for governance whether the fundamental actions needed to improve the school are being taken quickly and effectively. This will include assessing whether or not the school has identified the prioritised actions or any gaps, whether their diagnosis of the curriculum, their teaching, especially in terms of pupils being able to track following COVID-19 disruption, and their use of assessment to inform teaching, and whether governing actions to ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education, and whether they are building or adapting an effective curriculum, including remedial actions for pupils who need it
- conducting the subject of the support provided to the school, and how it is being and challenged provided by any external partners or school improvement partnership and how it is leading partners to progress towards becoming a good or outstanding school
- reviewing the impact of any support to the school on its improvement
- determining the extent of progress that has been made over time since the school was first judged to require improvement
- where appropriate, recommending whether or not the school is ready for a section 5 inspection

Monitoring inspection activities

176. During the inspection visit with the school, the lead inspector will discuss the inspection activities needed to gather evidence of the impact of leaders', managers' and governors' actions to improve the quality of education, as well as the extent to which has been made since the inspection, and over time.

177. While the lead inspector will consider the progress made in implementing the school's action plan and the impact of leaders', managers' and governors' actions, lead inspectors are not setting simple to evaluate action plans, but to challenge and support the school to ensure that they are focusing on the right things and making the most of the improvement and impact of their actions. Inspectors will also draw on the necessary improvements swiftly and sustainably.

178. The lead inspector will also consider the school improvement plan(s) of the provision which is being inspected and the extent to which it addresses specific aspects of inspection weaknesses. In evaluating the progress that the school is making to address these areas for improvement, the lead inspector will take into account the school's context and the school inspection handbook. Inspectors will also draw on the inspection methodology set out in the handbook in order to support them to form a view of this impact.

181. During the monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will:

- meet the headteacher and other senior leaders (including, where appropriate, the CEO of the MAT/their delegate or equivalent) to establish a purposeful and collaborative relationship, and to discuss the school's improvement. It is also for us to tackle issues from the section 5 inspection
- hold meetings with representatives of the local authority/proprietor body, the chair of governing body, the school improvement partnership, the MAT or academy trust/sponsor, Sustainable and Local Education Partnership, and other bodies/ groups to gather any other evidence needed. This may include discussions with staff and pupils, and should include a meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views and pupils' behaviour, and how pupils support their and their progress
- consider views expressed on Ofsted Parent View. Where possible, inspectors will talk informally to a group of parents
- discuss with the headteacher the next steps
- plan time to reflect on and summarise the evidence, draft the monitoring report and consider what, if any, further challenge or support is needed

Arriving at final judgements

182. At the end of the monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will make a single judgement on the overall progress:

- Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school

or

- Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school

At the end of the inspection

Final feedback

185. The lead inspector will hold a feedback meeting with key stakeholders, including as many governor representatives as possible, at the end of the monitoring inspection. This will normally be on the day of the inspection. If the inspection is of a school, the lead inspector will expect to speak to the governing body/trustees, proprietor, or as many governors/trustees as possible. If needed, they will arrange to do this by phone. The lead inspector will also expect to speak to the local authority or equivalent (LA/MAT) for the final feedback meeting, as appropriate. These meetings may include a virtual option using video/telephone calls if necessary.

186. Where the lead inspector has concerns about the school, the effectiveness of leadership and/or governance or the sort of progress with which governors are being informed, the lead inspector will offer to meet with governors before the feedback meeting to discuss their concerns.

187. If a monitoring inspection identifies serious concerns about aspects of the school's provision, the lead inspector will discuss with the school and LA/MAT the need for another monitoring visit, that could be required for us and may lead to the next inspection being brought forward.

188. In exceptional circumstances, where the concerns are such that the school requires immediate inspection under section 5, the section 8 inspection may be converted to a section 5 inspection. This will only be done if the lead inspector finds that the school's performance appears to be improving. We may also recommend inspection under section 5 inspection, usually within 6 weeks.[footnote 35] The section 5 inspection will normally be led by the section 8 inspector who will be leads and a section 5 inspector team will be conducted. Where necessary, more inspectors may be added to the inspection team.

Reporting on the monitoring inspection

193. The monitoring report letter which is written at the end of the monitoring inspection will include:

- the date of the inspection
- a summary of the type of evidence gathered during the inspection and the context of the school
- the judgement on whether the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection have been addressed
- the reasons, special impact of the work being carried out since the school visited since the section 5 inspection, with particular reference to the inspection judgements, the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, leadership and the effectiveness of school leadership, management and governance
- a judgement on the effectiveness of the action taken and the progress made by the school since the section 5 inspection
- the suitability of the school's plans to tackle the areas requiring improvement which were identified at the recent inspection and any recommendations from a previous monitoring inspection
- an evaluation of whether leaders and those responsible for governance are being effective at ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education, and particularly whether they are focusing on the right things and making
- any additional priorities for improvement arising from the monitoring inspection

Monitoring inspections for schools judged inadequate

194. Schools that are judged inadequate fall into one of 2 categories, both of which are formally added to inadequate as categories of concern:

- special measures

- or

- serious weaknesses (defined in law as 'requires significant improvement')

195. These terms are defined in Section 5 handbook 1 'Schools causing concern' section.

196. Maintained schools and PRUs that are judged to be causing concern will be subject to monitoring inspections. Academies and PRUs that are judged inadequate and maintained schools judged to have serious weaknesses ('requiring improvement') will be subject to monitoring inspections. Academies and PRUs judged to have serious weaknesses or special schools, but academies maintained nursery schools and non-maintained special schools judged inadequate will not be subject to monitoring inspections. Instead, the leadership and governance inspection will be conducted and the school will be 'relocated' to another trust.

197. Maintained schools or PRUs that have been issued with an academy order and academies that are being brokered or 'relocated' to new sponsors following termination of their previous sponsorship will be subject to monitoring inspections. Schools that have been brokered or 'relocated' after 9 months.

198. Academies judged to have serious weaknesses and which are not brokered or 'relocated' will be subject to monitoring inspections. The first inspection is expected within 30 months of the publication of the inspection report in which they were judged to have serious weaknesses. Academies that are judged to have serious weaknesses will be subsequently up to 6 terms.

199. Academies judged to require special measures and which are not 'relocated', will be subject to monitoring inspections. The timing of the next section 5 inspection is determined by the academy's rate of improvement. However, it will normally take place within 2 terms of the academy being judged to require special measures. We will consider exceptions (for the first inspection after the academy has been open) on a case-by-case basis.

200. Once an inadequate maintained school or PRU has become a sponsored academy, the section 5 inspection will be conducted as a section 5 inspection of a sponsored academy. It will be treated as a new school, with its first inspection being a section 5 inspection. This will usually take place during the third year of operation.[footnote 36] If a school has been judged inadequate and has been brokered or 'relocated' to a new trust, being 'relocated' this sponsorship is a new trust. Ofsted may instead choose to schedule a section 5 inspection sooner than the 3 years.

Notification

168. The lead inspector will telephone the school the day before the start of the section monitoring inspection.[footnote 37] If the headteacher is unavailable, the lead inspector should ask to speak to the next senior member of staff and explain the circumstances for the monitoring inspection.

169. In academies that are part of a MAT, the lead inspector should also arrange to speak to the relevant senior officer responsible for overseeing the inspection where these roles are part of the structure.[footnote 38]

170. During the initial telephone call with the school, the lead inspector will:

- confirm the date of the inspection
- explain the purpose of the monitoring inspection
- confirm that the school will inform the governing body and the local authority/proprietor (such as relevant) and that the lead inspector will wish to speak to them during the inspection.[footnote 39]
- provide the opportunity to discuss any specific issues that the lead inspector should be made aware of before arriving to the monitoring inspection (if any)

171. During this conversation, the lead inspector will discuss with the headteacher how the school is ready for the monitoring inspection. This will include discussing the curriculum and inspection activities that can not our leaders' assessment, including, include: lesson by pupils, meeting staff, reviewing documentation, reviewing pupil's work, and lesson visits. The lead inspector and headteacher will also agree inspection activities, including meetings with senior and middle leaders and how the school leaders have been working on, for example alternatives or behaviour.

Guidance for inspecting schools that have serious weaknesses

Introduction

172. Inspectors are judged to have serious weaknesses where HMCI is of the opinion that:[footnote 40]

> "The school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably expected to perform."

175. Schools judged to have serious weaknesses are not required to prepare a separate action plan, but are expected to amend their existing plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the section 5 inspection. The governing body/ authority, the proprietor is the trust board must submit a statement of action to HMCI and Ministers, which sets out how the school will address the areas for improvement.[footnote 41] An inspector will review the statement of action, however, HMCI does not initial feedback in writing on the fitness for purpose of the statement within 10 working days of receipt. The statement of action should be in place and fit for purpose. We trust authority, the proprietor or the trust will be informed. They will be asked to address the weaknesses urgently and to ensure that the revised version is submitted to HMCI and Ministers within 10 working days of receipt. Ofsted will confirm to Ministers for purpose. This will be a matter for the Secretary of State to consider.

176. The purpose of the monitoring inspection(s) is to evaluate how much progress the school has made in completing

- the school's response to being judged as having serious weaknesses and how effective the school's action plan is in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous section 5 inspection, taking the COVID-19 pandemic into account
- the extent to which the school's actions are rigorously focused on tackling the weaknesses that the section 5 inspection identified
- how effective the school's leadership in evaluating school development and improvement plans to meet the challenge of moving out of the serious weaknesses category
- the impact their governance at the school and learning on bringing about the necessary improvements
- whether school leaders and those responsible for governance are being active to ensure that pupils receive an improved quality of education, and particularly whether they are focusing on the right things and making the most of their actions

178. Monitoring inspections cover aspects of the school's provision that inspectors consider selective and focused strategy or where the school needs to improve in order to come out of the serious weaknesses category. The aspects of the school's provision that the lead inspector identified during the section 5 inspection that judged the school to have serious weaknesses.

179. The scope of those responsible for governance should be evaluated to assess the extent to which they are making an effective contribution to leadership and management and to the quality of education.

180. If governance was not identified as an area for improvement at the section 5 inspection but the monitoring inspection raises concerns about weak governance, inspectors should discuss this with the school and LA/MAT and may need to carry out a full governance inspection. We must highlight this in our report.

181. Inspectors should consider whether the school's leaders continue to demonstrate commitment that the school's capacity to improve is strengthening. It is important that the school's leaders are having a significant impact on all of the school's areas of weakness and are capable of sustaining improvement.

186. There should be clear evidence that leaders and managers are having an impact on the school's work and that they are making the most of their actions. Governors whose attainment is low, inspectors must also consider the impact of the support provided to the school, with particular reference to the proprietor's or the trust's capacity to secure improvement, and the extent to which the governing body maintains a critical independent.

188. Not all schools will receive a second or third monitoring inspection. This will depend on the school's rate of improvement. However, it is important that inspectors and the school's role of improvement towards becoming a good school.

190. If a second or third monitoring inspection is carried out, inspectors will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's response to the areas of the serious weaknesses designation. An exceeding judgement will be made in the same format as for the first monitoring inspection, as outlined above.

191. The judgement will depend on the school's progress towards being out of the category of concern. Although generally this will be informed by the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection, HMCI may also take into account other aspects of the school's provision. Inspectors should make the judgement about the school's overall progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation, taking into account the evidence they have gathered and any professional judgement.

192. Where inspectors are satisfied that the school is taking effective action and making enough progress for the likely removal of the serious weaknesses category, they will take the decision to deem the section 8 monitoring inspection as a section 5 inspection. This will be based on the school's overall progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses. Where a monitoring inspection identifies significant concerns about aspects of the school's performance that were not identified in the previous section 5 inspection, HMCI may also deem the section 8 inspection to be a section 5 inspection and will affirm the judgement about the school's overall progress.

193. Where the serious weaknesses designation is removed, whether through a section 5 inspection or a section 8 inspection deemed to be a section 5 inspection, HMCI will inspect no sooner, in the first day of the inspection, notify a non-exempt school.

194. Where the section 5 inspection has reached the judgement that the school no longer has serious weaknesses, the next feedback and written report must include the formal statement that:

> "In accordance with section 13 (2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures."

195. The introduction to the report should explain why the school was inspected. For example:

> "When a school has been inspected in its 20s, it was judged to have serious weaknesses. As a result, the school was subsequently inspected under section 5 of the Education Inspection. Leaders and managers were judged to be taking not taking effective action."

After the inspection

Feedback at the end of the monitoring inspection(s)

196. The lead inspector will hold a feedback meeting at the end of each monitoring inspection as the Fitness for purpose of the statement of action and of the school's improvement plan. Feedback at the end of any monitoring inspection should include:

- report the range of evidence gathered
- include the judgements made about the effectiveness of actions towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation, including whether the school's improvement identifying the section 5 inspection that contributed to the serious weaknesses
- the extent to which the school is the support on school improvement
- clear and specific feedback on the lead inspector's view on the inspection preparation and during the inspection
- the extent to which the school is making effective use of the support provided, but the judgements will not change unless a judgement is made
- a summary of the evidence gathered by inspectors
- a summary of any significant changes that the school has made since the section 5 inspection
- a judgement about the effectiveness of actions towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation
- the extent to which the school is making effective use of the support provided, but the judgements will not change unless a judgement is made

The monitoring inspection letter will support

197. For all monitoring inspections, the school will receive a brief covering letter with the report, which will include the date of the inspection, the type of inspection, and the Ofsted inspector's details. The first and possibly the second monitoring inspection will also include a statement of the Fitness for purpose of the statement of action and of the school's improvement plan.

198. When a monitoring inspection is the only one or two aspects of provision, this should be clearly explained in the evidence section.

199. The monitoring letter will report about:

- a summary of the evidence gathered by inspectors
- a summary of any significant changes that the school has made since the section 5 inspection
- a judgement about the effectiveness of actions towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation
- the extent to which the school is making effective use of the support provided, but the judgements will not change unless a judgement is made

Guidance for inspecting schools that are subject to special measures

Introduction

241. Schools are made subject to special measures under section 19(1) of the Education Act 2005, where the Chief Inspector is of the opinion that:

> The school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for the school are not capable of securing that it does so, demonstrably that capacity to secure improvement in the near future.

242. Schools that are subject to special measures are not required to prepare a separate action plan. These schools should review their existing plans to ensure they address the issues identified in their most recent inspection.

243. The local authority, the proprietor and the trust board must submit a statement of action to HMI within 10 working days of the inspection report being published (see page 19). [TEXTREF 1] An inspector will review the statement of action. Inspectors will make a judgement about the quality of the statement of action within 10 working days of receiving the statement. If the statement of action is judged to be fit for purpose, the local authority, proprietor or trust will be informed and asked to implement the statement of action. If the statement of action is judged not fit for purpose, inspectors will re-visit the revised statement of action and confirm its fitness for purpose.

The monitoring inspections

244. Inspectors will usually carry out the first monitoring inspection within 3 to 6 months of the publication of the section 5 inspection report.

245. A school may receive up to 5 monitoring inspections over the 30 months following the publication of the section 5 inspection report. Inspectors will decide if the focus will be on getting a sufficient rate of challenge of concern and the capacities for a schools subject to special measures to improve within 18 to 24 months. Re-inspecting such schools at 30 months should be the exception.

246. At the end of a monitoring inspection, inspectors will consider whether the school is making sufficient progress in the areas of weakness identified in the section 5 inspection. The section 8 inspection will be described as a section 8 inspection. Where judgements regarding the section 5 school inspection handbook will be made and in relation to the school's improvement plan.

247. After a programme of monitoring inspections up to 30 months, it is unlikely it will be subject to special measures. It must be re-inspected under section 5.

During the inspection

248. During the monitoring inspections, inspectors are required to evaluate the school's progress towards the removal of special measures. Inspectors will use a searching judgement as whether:

- leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures

or

- leaders and managers are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

249. This judgement will be based on the school's progress towards exiting the category of concern. Although generally this will be informed by the area for improvement identified in the section 5 inspection, other factors may be taken into account, for example, staffing and pupil numbers.

250. The crucial factor is the anticipated timescales for the removal of special measures given the current rate of improvement. A school that is being defined as making good course to have special measures removed within 18 to 24 months of the monitoring inspection programme, should be judged to be taking effective action. Inspectors should not be expected to wait for the school to make sufficient progress to continue to be subject to special measures when the section 5 inspection report states otherwise.

251. At the final monitoring inspection inspectors must:

- judge the progress that the school is making towards the removal of special measures
- decide whether the school should be permitted to appeal ECM to the Chief Inspector of academies, make appropriate recommendations regarding such appointments

Evaluating support

252. During the first monitoring inspection, inspectors will meet with the headteacher, the chair of governing bodies, the proprietor or chair of the trust board, the local authority trustee and a key governor responsible for provision. Inspectors will hold telephone calls of how well stewart bowles and these responsible for governance are implementing the statement of action and the school's improvement plan.

253. On subsequent inspections, inspectors will also report on the impact of the trust's support. In addition, they will also evaluate the impact of the local authority's support.

254. At the conclusion of each monitoring inspection, inspectors should consider whether the school continues to require special measures.

255. Whatever the outcome, during the feedback at the end of the inspection inspectors should inform the headteacher, the chair of governing bodies, the proprietor or chair of the trust board of the decision to leave special measures in place.

256. The judgement that special measures are no longer required may insize reference to:

- evidence from previous monitoring inspections
- the best interests of the pupils. This is paramount
- the school's ability to demonstrate that it meets the needs of all pupils and the wider community, sustained improvement. This determines the timing of monitoring inspections
- the extent to which capacity for sustained improvement has been demonstrated by the leadership and management of the school. This may be evidenced by external support or on-site re-inflection in the school.
- the overall rate of improvement. Some schools may not be making enough progress to exit special measures within the 30 months following inspection.

257. When special measures are removed, inspectors must, at the end of the inspection, notify the relevant Ofsted regional duty desk to log the necessary details.

Seeking the views of parents and staff

258. Inspectors should seek the views of parents from Ofsted Parent View during the inspection to also secure information from respondents into account. The views of staff may also be gathered through an online questionnaire. Where this is the case, the inspection team should inform staff of the purpose of the survey and how to access the notification of inspection. The school and parents is encouraged staff to complete the online questionnaire. Staff should complete and submit their questionnaire by 3pm on the first day of the inspection.

After the inspection

Reporting on the end of the monitoring inspection

259. At the end of the monitoring inspection, inspectors will provide oral feedback and make clear whether the judgement or recommendation about the appointment of SCTs should remain.

260. At the end of each monitoring inspection, oral feedback must include the inspectors' judgement about the school's progress towards the removal of special measures, describing the actions the inspectors made against the priority for improvement identified in the section 5 inspection report.

261. Where the inspection team has reached the judgement that special measures are no longer required, the headteacher and another report should include the following statement that:

> In accordance with section 13(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school is no longer requires special measures.[1]

263. This judgement is not subject to moderation. However, an exit questionnaire, if should remain confirmed at the final report is carried by a team. Where special measures are removed, a full section 5 report must be written.

264. The monitoring letter and report for the monitoring inspections must include:

- Description about the effectiveness of actions towards the removal of special measures
- Judgement about whether the school should be permitted to employ ECTs
- a brief summary of significant changes to the context of the school
- an evaluation of the progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement, including:
  - strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement
  - weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement
- where appropriate, a judgement on the impact of support and other partners

265. In addition to the above, the monitoring letter and report for the first monitoring inspection must include:

- a judgement on the fitness for purpose of the statement of action and of the school's improvement plan
- an evaluation of whether school leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective actions towards the pupils receive a good quality of education, and the school is making good progress towards the removal of special measures
- where a monitoring inspection focuses on only one or two aspects of provision, it should be clearly explained in the evidence section

266. Progress reader will additionally provide for further improvement, identified in previous monitoring inspections, should be described in the monitoring report. They should be described in the section 8 report, unless they are not the original areas identified at the section 5 inspection.

267. Where it is judged that the school no longer requires special measures, the section 8 report should be written as a section 5 report. The section 8 report should be written but not be published in accordance with the section 5 inspection report.

268. The school details page of the report must include the statement:

> This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was deemed as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

269. The introduction to the report should explain why the school was inspected. For example:

> When our School was inspected in us 20xx, it was judged to require special measures. We carried out this monitoring inspection to report on the school's progress in monitoring inspection, leaders and managers were judged to be taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

270. A report that removes special measures should include the following statement in the section 8 report, in the section 5 inspection report:

> In accordance with section 13(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.[1]

Inspections with no formal designation

271. Under section 5(3) of the Education Act 2005 (the Act), Ofsted carries out inspections to follow up concerns about schools that are not in a category of concern. These inspections are called section 8 inspections. Through, for example, a complaint made to us or other news.

272. This part of the section 8 handbook provides guidance for school inspectors with a specific focus. This includes a focus on the effective implementation of safeguarding arrangements and/or aspects of:

- quality of education (or, for example, a subject survey visit examining a particular subject through the lens of quality of education)
- behaviour and attitudes
- behaviour and attitudes
- leadership and management (including governance)

273. Inspectors will follow the guidance where Ofsted has concerns that the safety of pupils and/or staff is at risk or where information suggests that there has been a serious breakdown in management or governance. Inspectors will also follow the guidance related strongly through our risk assessment process, or extending the scope of a school inspection or other information we receive. Where we receive information about a school that we do not inspect, we will consider the information and, if it is deemed appropriate, we will be before making a decision on whether to inspect the school and the nature of the inspection we should undertake. We will also use our risk assessment process to inform the relevant Ofsted regional director. Where an inspection takes place as a result of information we have received, we will also take account of guidance in section 8 of the inspection handbook.

274. These inspections are selective and focus sharply on the issues raised that caused the school to be inspected. Inspection arrangements should not disproportionately the overall effectiveness of the school or any of the key judgements within the EIF. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the extent to which inspection focus is on the school's safeguarding arrangements, inspection will take account of the evidence on inspecting safeguarding.

275. It is important to keep all these leading, managing and governing a school and responsible for the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. Governors in particular should understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and be rigorous in their expectations. Concerns about safeguarding may raise questions about the effectiveness of governance, and governors should be able to demonstrate how they gain assurance. Therefore, in some cases, inspectors will to formal description will focus on governance. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the extent to which inspection focus is on the school's safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors will take account of the inspection and make sure that leaders are fully aware of this when the inspection is underway. Inspectors will also use their professional judgement to decide if the school has evidenced its current leadership and management or other aspects of its work where appropriate.

276. If, during the inspection, inspectors are sufficiently concerned about the overall standard of education provided by the school, the inspection may, under section 8(2) of the Act, be converted into a section 5 inspection. In such cases, the judgements required for the full evaluation schedule will be made and a section 5 inspection report produced and published.

Before the inspection

Staffing and scheduling the inspection

277. Section 8 inspections are carried out by HMI, regardless of the size of the school. However, inspections may be requests depending on the complexity of the concerns that were brought to Ofsted's attention and that caused the school to be inspected. Inspectors will usually be in the school for one day, but may be in the school for shorter or longer, depending on the circumstances of the school and the nature of the concerns that led to the inspection.

278. Inspections being carried out as a result of a qualifying complaint made to Ofsted will normally be led by an HMI.

279. Inspectors that draw from information received by Ofsted should take place as soon is practicable after the decision to inspect has taken place. The exact timing is, of course, dependent on the nature of the concerns. Inspectors will use our risk assessment process to determine the timing of the visit.

Notification

280. The notice given to the school of the inspection will be half a day, the same as for section 5 inspections. However, Ofsted may carry out the inspection without notice. In such cases, the HMI will normally telephone the headteacher or other senior leader before arriving on site.

281. Where notice of inspection is given, the HMI will make the initial telephone call to the headteacher or other senior leader to discuss the nature of the concerns that have led to the inspection. The HMI will also use the opportunity to gather information to inform the discussion. The HMI will make the purpose of the inspection clear during the initial telephone call. If the HMI is unable to make contact with the headteacher initially, the HMI must leave the purpose of the inspection and the reasons for the school close to the headteacher at the earliest opportunity after he or she arrives at the school.

282. If the school is being inspected because of a qualifying complaint made to Ofsted, the school under section 116 of the Act, the HMI will inform the school of this, as well as the nature of the concerns raised by the complaint, to the extent that it is appropriate to do so.

283. The HMI will explain that the inspection will focus on the wider issues raised by the complaint and will investigate the complaint itself. If the complainant has requested anonymity, the HMI will explain that it may not be possible to investigate the complaint if identity is not disclosed to the school. At times, the nature of the complaint may make it clear to the school who the complainant is, even if the complainant. Regardless. Where anonymity is not sought, the HMI will inform the school.

284. The headteacher, at the end of the telephone conversation, should be in a position to understand the reason for and the purpose of the inspection. The HMI should use the mandatory requirement for a school to inform parents about the inspection. The HMI should also be in a position to inform the school of the inspection team and to conclude their week ahead of the inspection through Ofsted Parent View.

285. Following the pre-inspection telephone conversation, Ofsted will confirm the arrangements for the inspection by sending a letter to the headteacher. Where no prior notice of the inspection is given, formal notification of the inspection by Ofsted will be made by telephone to the headteacher or other senior leader.

286. Schools are not required to provide copies of any information in advance of the inspection, but if these are offered, the HMI should accept them.

Preparing for the inspection

287. The HMI must check the provider information portal (PIP) for information relevant to the inspection. The HMI will also gather inspectors about the inspection and ensure that the key lines of enquiry and key issues to pursue are understood. When an inspection is based on a qualifying complaint made to Ofsted, the complaint itself is Ofsted. Inspectors must not investigate the complaint itself but must focus on the wider issues that have led to the complaint and how school leaders and management of the school have responded to the complaint and will be followed up during inspection.

288. To prepare for the inspection inspectors will review:

- copies of any qualifying complaint(s) received, other information on the PIP and any response letters
- issues raised by the investigation of any qualifying complaints [TEXTREF 2] about the school
- the previous section 5 inspection report, where one exists, and any subsequent section 8 inspection reports, such as monitoring inspections
- Ofsted Parent View
- information from the pre-inspection telephone conversation with the headteacher
- any documentation emailed to the HMI in advance of the inspection, as agreed between the headteacher and the HMI

During the inspection

Engagement with the school's senior leadership team

289. The meeting at the start of the inspection may or may not involve the whole of the senior leadership team. It will be led by the HMI and will be used to agree how the visit will be to be done, as with one or two senior leaders, while sufficient time is given to potential interruption to the school's normal routine.

290. The meeting with senior leaders at the start of the inspection will cover pertinent issues about the school and the focus of the inspection. It must give the headteacher and other senior leaders the opportunity to provide information, ask questions, raise concerns, and clarify what exactly inspectors are looking for that.

Evidence gathering during the inspection

291. The levels of activities carried out during these inspections are different to section 5 inspections. However, where the focus of the inspection is on the school's safeguarding arrangements, activities should focus on safeguarding and may include:

- a review of the single central record and safeguarding policy
- a review of relevant records for the designated person for safeguarding in the school and those that were subsequently referred to the designated officer, and their outcomes
- a sample of staff training on child protection and the prevention of radicalisation and extremism
- a review of staff recommendations for dealing with relevant staffing issues, for example suspension or disciplinary investigations/sanctions and issues of child protection and/or safety. This is not a review of individual cases, but of school practice and procedures, for example:
  - discussion with pupils and staff
  - a school's offer of a relevant safeguarding education curriculum and how it tries to ensure of pupils and staff are aware
  - a review of persistent absence cases and exclusions data
  - consideration of the views of parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View and, where available, through discussions/meetings with parents or groups of parents and carers
  - any relevant issues that have led to or prevent concern from the school's safeguarding and/or safeguarding
- the school's approach to the prevention of bullying, including cyber bullying, and how it has been tackled
- any issues that relate to pupil attendance

292. The lead school inspector of the day will depend on the issues to be followed up and is likely to be drawn from the sources of evidence described in the school inspection handbook.

293. During the inspection, the HMI will maintain an ongoing dialogue with the headteacher and senior managers. It is especially important to make sure that the school is aware of any concerns that are being raised during the visit. The HMI should ha the school, especially where safeguarding, should not be a surprise to the headteacher and senior leaders.

294. Inspectors should not make judgements on the overall effectiveness of the school or any of the key judgements within the EIF. This is only necessary for section 5 inspections. However, inspectors will need to make judgements and recommendations about the extent to which the school needs to do to bring the inspection to an end.

295. If, however, inspectors have sufficient evidence that some of the core reporting areas for judging a school under section 5 inspection have been met, the inspector will need to consider whether the effectiveness of the provision as a whole has declined. In such circumstances, the inspector should discuss with the Ofsted regional director of inspection, under section 8(2) of the Act. In these cases, all the judgements required for the evaluation schedule will be made and a section 5 inspection report published.

296. Alternatively, where evidence provides concerns that overall standards may no longer be as last inspected under section 5, but where no serious concerns have been identified, the section 8 inspection should be converted into a section 5 inspection and a full section 5 inspection brought forward. The timing of any such inspection will not be indicated to the school. If the inspection raises concerns, these concerns should be discussed with the Ofsted regional director.

297. Where safeguarding is the focus of the inspection or where concerns have arisen during the course the inspection, the lead inspector, having reviewed all the evidence and discussed it with the HMI, will report to the senior whether safeguarding is effective.

298. If there are relatively minor shortcomings in a school's procedures and the school is able to resolve them on the day of the inspection, their inspectors can agree an assessment that safeguarding is effective. If safeguarding is ineffective and/or if inspectors have concerns that at risk, the lead inspector will deem the inspection as a section 5 inspection.

At the end of the inspection

Final feedback

299. The HMI and headteacher should discuss which other members of staff, if any, will be invited to the final feedback session. The feedback is likely to be brief and focused. Where it is not practicable to do so.

300. The end feedback at the end of the inspection. Typically towards the end of the second day of a long inspection. Inspectors

- report the extent of the evidence base
- cover the issues brought to Ofsted's attention that caused the school to be inspected
- report about whether the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective
- be clear about the findings and the specific reasons for the judgement the inspector
- report the school's areas of strength and any aspects that the school needs to improve in relation to safeguarding and child protection, and the broad areas of focus for the inspection
- make clear that the text of the report may differ from the oral feedback

Unannounced behaviour inspections

301. Schools will be selected for a section 8 unannounced behaviour inspection because Ofsted has cause for concern about behaviour and attitudes. Concerns may include, for example, information received from parents, pupils, staff, local authority or local education authority officers.

302. The inspection will focus on the factors that research and inspection evidence suggest schools need to pay to pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes. These factors are:

- a calm and orderly environment in the school and the classroom, as this is essential for pupils to be able to learn
- the setting of clear routines and expectations for the behaviour of pupils across all aspects of school life, including:
  - a strong focus on attendance and punctuality to minimise disruption
  - clear and effective behaviour and attendance policies with clearly defined sanctions and rewards, consistently applied by all staff
  - pupils' motivation and positive attitudes to learning and their pride in their achievement. The development of positive attitudes can also have a longer-term impact on pupils' behaviour and their preparedness for adult life
  - a positive and respectful school culture in which staff have clear and high expectations
  - an environment in which pupils feel safe, and in which bullying, discrimination and peer-on-peer abuse – similar to harassment – are not tolerated and are dealt with effectively when they occur

303. The inspection will include a judgement on the effectiveness of the actions taken by leaders and managers, including governors, since the previous inspection (where applicable) to improve behaviour. This will include evaluating how well leaders are ensuring that the school's approaches to behaviour are consistently applied to high standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning.

304. If the evidence gathered and scrutinised during the inspection indicates that behaviour, welfare and safety or any other aspects of the school have deteriorated, and pupils are at risk of harm, the lead inspector may, under section 8 of the Act, deem the inspection to be a section 5 inspection. In such circumstances, the section 8 inspection, all the judgements required for the evaluation schedule will be made and a section 5 inspection report published. In such cases, the inspection will be deemed to be a section 5 inspection. Ofsted will inform the school that the inspection is a section 5 inspection.

305. A monitoring report should be written unless the relevant regional director confirms that the section 8 is deemed as a section 5 inspection.

Before the inspection

Staffing and scheduling the inspection

306. Unannounced behaviour inspections will usually be carried out by one inspector for one day. These inspections may be led by an HMI or by OIs.

Notification

307. The inspector will contact the school 15 minutes before arriving to announce the inspection by the headteacher or other senior member of staff. This will be a telephone call. The notification call is simply to inform the school that the inspector is on the school site and the inspector will leave off after arrangements are made for him or her at the school.

308. If no one from the school answers the telephone, inspectors will arrive at the school and announce the inspector on arrival.

309. Inspectors should target on around 8.15am and not before 8am.

310. On arrival, the lead inspector will begin their observation of the start of the school day, keeping the initial meeting with the headteacher brief. The lead inspector will agree with the headteacher a time to meet after the initial observations of the school.

311. If the school is being inspected as a result of a qualifying complaint about the school, the lead inspector should inform the headteacher in line with the guidance in paragraphs 283 to 286.

Preparing for the inspection

312. The lead inspector will prepare for the inspection by:

- reading and recording any comments about behaviour and attendance in the school's latest section 5 inspection report and any section 8 inspection reports, including those from survey visits
- reviewing the school's behaviour policy, which should be available on the school's website
- identifying, from the previous section 5 report, whether the school has any pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabled pupils and progressing and behaving
- analysing the most up-to-date information about permanent and fixed-term exclusions, including the proportions of boys and girls, pupils from different groups of long-term exclusions and any groups that are excluded disproportionately
- analysing the most up-to-date information about overall and persistent absence available in the DfE's statistics and analysis of school and pupil attendance data
- checking Ofsted's PIP for information about any complaints about the school

313. From their initial analysis, the lead inspector will be able to identify any concerns and key issues that will be shared with the headteacher and senior leaders at a brief meeting at the start of the inspection. The lead inspector will also decide on the focus of the inspection may change as evidence is gathered during the inspection.

During the inspection

314. The majority of the inspection activity must focus on observing short parts of lessons and observing informal times of the school day in order to evaluate pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Inspectors should also spend time in the school's playground and other areas where pupils congregate to observe their behaviour and attitudes.

315. Inspectors will:

- observe the behaviour of pupils, which should be undertaken on the school's website
- identifying, from the previous section 5 report, whether the school has any pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabled pupils and progressing and behaving
- analysing the most up-to-date information about permanent and fixed-term exclusions, including the proportions of boys and girls, pupils from different groups of long-term exclusions and any groups that are excluded disproportionately
- analysing the most up-to-date information about overall and persistent absence available in the DfE's statistics and analysis of school and pupil attendance data
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318. Inspectors will:

the inspection.

275. The lead inspector will meet with senior staff briefly to inform them of the key issues and lines of enquiry from pre-inspection analysis and then arrange a further meeting to discuss emerging findings and follow up any issues that arise during the day. This meeting must not overlap with lunchtime periods, break times or with the time pupils leave the school, as these times of the day must be observed. The lead inspector may also request that a senior member of staff be present during the scrutiny of documentation in order to answer questions as they arise.

276. As it is important that the lead inspector sees pupils' typical behaviour throughout the day, the lead inspector will not jointly observe short extracts or whole classes with the headteacher, senior leaders or staff.

277. To gather and evaluate evidence about the impact of actions taken by leaders and managers, including governors, to improve behaviour, inspectors will evaluate pupils' behaviour, the management of behaviour and the culture of the school.

Inspectors will carry out evidence-gathering activities that include, but are not limited to:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons (including, where relevant, with new, temporary or less experienced teachers). A particular focus will be placed on low-level disruption, for example pupils:
  - calling out without permission
  - being late to lessons or slow to start work or follow instructions
  - showing a lack of respect for each other and staff
  - not bringing the right equipment
  - chatting when they are supposed to be working or listening to the teacher
  - using mobile devices inappropriately in lessons
  - wasting time, through teachers having to deal with inappropriate uniform
  - packing up well before the end of the lesson
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussions with pupils during break times and lunchtimes, arriving and leaving the school
- observation of any system of 'internal exclusion' that the school uses to manage behaviour
- at least one planned discussion with a group of pupils whose behaviour the school has helped to improve over time
- scrutiny of documentary evidence[footnote 35]
- discussions with leaders and staff
- gathering evidence about the typical behaviour of pupils who are not in the school on the day of the inspection
- visiting any off-site unit that the schools runs for pupils whose behaviour is poor, or who have low attendance

278. Inspectors must take account of the following:

- pupils' attitudes to learning and their conduct in lessons
- pupils' conduct around the school, including the way in which they speak to each other and to staff
- how well leaders and staff model good behaviour to pupils
- how well leaders and managers model good behaviour management techniques to staff
- the effectiveness of the management of pupils' behaviour, including how well leaders, managers and governors analyse and use documentary evidence to improve the way behaviour is managed
- if the school uses fixed-term or internal exclusion, the impact of this on improving behaviour
- pupils' views about behaviour and all types of bullying (these views must be gathered from a range of pupils at informal times, not just from a formal discussion)
- any specific issues raised in the previous inspection report about pupils' behaviour and whether these have been tackled effectively and are showing clear and sustainable signs of improvement

Judgement

279. Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of the actions taken by leaders and managers, including governors, since the previous inspection, to improve behaviour. This includes securing consistently positive attitudes to learning, or maintaining previously high standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning.

280. The inspection report will state one of the following:

- For schools where behaviour was judged to require improvement at their previous section 5 inspection:

> "Leaders and managers have/have not taken effective action to improve behaviour and secure consistently positive attitudes to learning."

- For schools where behaviour was judged to be good or outstanding at their previous section 5 inspection:

> "Leaders and managers have/have not taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection."

281. The monitoring report should cover the following, with specific examples:

- pupils' conduct around the school during the inspection, including the way in which they move around the school, speak to each other and to staff, conform with the school's dress code; and pupils' typical conduct around the school, evidenced by pupils' views, staff's views, and the school's documentary evidence
- pupils' attitudes to learning during the lessons observed and pupils' typical attitudes to learning, evidenced by pupils' views, staff's views and the school's documentary evidence
- how well pupils' behaviour is managed by leaders and staff on a day-to-day basis
- the extent to which the school's culture promotes and supports good behaviour, including:
  - the way in which staff speak to pupils and to parents and carers
  - how consistently staff reinforce the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour
  - the way in which the headteacher and other leaders model the behaviour that is expected of all staff
  - the way in which the headteacher and other leaders support staff to promote good behaviour

282. The monitoring report will include recommendations that set out what the school needs to do to improve the way it manages pupils' behaviour. How well the school has addressed these recommendations will be followed up during the school's next inspection.

At the end of the inspection

Final feedback

283. Feedback should be offered at the end of the day.[footnote 36] Normally, the final feedback meeting will be attended by:

- the headteacher/principal
- other senior staff as appropriate
- the chair of the school's governing board/academy board of trustees and as many governors/trustees as possible
- in an academy that is part of a MAT, the CEO/their delegate or equivalent
- a representative from the local authority (for maintained schools) or academy sponsor

Annex – Inspection activities relating to behaviour

Observations of behaviour and informal discussions with pupils

1. Inspectors must observe behaviour at the following times:

- pupils' arrival at school
- in lessons
- in between lessons
- break-time
- lunchtime
- as pupils leave the school

2. During these times, inspectors should talk to pupils about behaviour, their welfare and their safety.

Pupils' arrival at school

3. Inspectors will:

- observe interactions between pupils, for example whether they are pleasant and relaxed or aggressive. Consider whether different groups of pupils look comfortable together and whether there are any tensions
- ask different pupils about their journey to and from school, for example how safe they feel; whether they encounter any bullying during that time; what they would do to seek help from the school if they did
- evaluate whether there are sufficient numbers of staff on duty. Consider where staff are situated and whether they are actively supervising
- observe interactions between staff and parents, and between staff and pupils, for example how staff greet pupils and speak to them and whether this provides a good role model
- consider pupils' vulnerability in the playground, for example whether pupils have to wait for a long time before entering the school, whether they are in full view of the school or whether there are areas where pupils might be vulnerable
- in special schools and PRUs, observe pupils as they get out of taxis and minibuses and ask them about their journey. Consider aspects of safety, such as supervision and bullying
- if parents and carers are available, ask them their views about behaviour and safety
- consider how well staff uphold the school's expectations, for example by reminding pupils about how they should treat each other in the playground, move around the school and make sure their uniform is correct
- consider whether pupils are dressed according to the school's uniform or dress code

Pupils' behaviour between lessons and on arrival at lessons

4. Inspectors will:

- consider what interactions are like between pupils, and between staff and pupils, as pupils move from one lesson to the next, for example whether staff remind pupils of expectations, convey a sense of urgency in getting to the next lesson promptly and greet them as they arrive
- evaluate the extent to which pupils are aware of and respect each other's physical space
- consider how well staff model the behaviour expected from pupils
- consider how promptly and calmly pupils enter classrooms and how quickly they respond to staff's instructions

Pupils' behaviour at break time

5. Inspectors will:

- consider how pupils are grouped, and observe whether there are any tensions or if certain pupils are excluded
- seek pupils' views about bullying, for example whether they experience bullying, what they do to seek help, how they feel about break-times, whether there are any 'no go areas' for different year groups. Include any pupils who are by themselves
- evaluate the structure of break-times and how well the structure supports good behaviour. In primary and special schools, consider how well pupils are being taught to play and interact well together. In secondary schools, consider whether the outdoor space allows all groups to be safe
- go to the far reaches of the school site to consider how well supervised these are and whether there are any spaces where bullying could easily occur
- evaluate the appropriateness of the language pupils use towards each other, for example whether it is respectful or includes derogatory language, and evaluate how well staff challenge such language if they hear it[footnote 37]
- consider behaviour in and around the toilets, especially in secondary schools, and how well supervised they are

Pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes

6. Inspectors will:

- observe the same aspects as for break-times, such as interactions, supervision, safety and organisation, and check that pupils have an appropriate place to eat their lunch if they bring their own
- evaluate how well pupils conduct themselves in the dining room and how well staff model desired behaviours to the pupils
- establish whether pupils who are eligible for free school meals have a different payment system to others and whether this marks them out as different
- ask the lunchtime staff about bullying, for example what they see and how they help to prevent it
- ask the lunchtime staff about behaviour in general: what they see and how pupils respond to them, for example when lunchtime staff ask pupils to pick up litter or clear their table

Observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons

7. Inspectors should carry out short visits to a range of lessons. Observations should include some starts and ends of lessons in order to evaluate how well teachers manage transition between lessons, how quickly pupils settle, and whether pupils remain focused to the end of lessons.

8. Evaluations should include consideration of the following:

- whether pupils arrive promptly at lessons and with the equipment they need for the lesson
- how promptly pupils respond to staff's instructions
- how clear the school's expectations of behaviour are, for example through classroom displays
- how well teachers use the school's behaviour management system, including issuing rewards as well as sanctions if these are part of the procedures, and how effective this system is in supporting staff to manage behaviour and helping pupils to behave well
- how well pupils respond to teaching assistants and other support staff
- how well pupils interact with each other, and whether they work cooperatively in groups or pairs as required
- whether pupils are supportive of each other's learning, for example not making derogatory comments about other pupils' answers to questions
- how well staff help pupils to interact positively with each other, for example whether they model appropriate ways to talk to other people, tolerate or ignore put-downs or tackle them, and are explicit about the need to respect others

9. Inspectors should ask pupils questions about typical behaviour in lessons, if it is possible to do so without disturbing learning.

Observation of 'internal exclusion' room, 'remove room' or equivalent

10. If the school uses this type of provision, inspectors should visit this during lesson time to evaluate:

- leaders' intended purpose for the room
- the appropriateness of the room as a place for pupils to learn, considering pupils' age and particular needs
- pupils' behaviour while in the room
- the use of the room, for example how many pupils are present and whether this is typical (through scrutiny of records)
- how well the room is used to improve behaviour, for example whether there is any follow-up action after the pupil has attended the room
- whether the school informs and involves parents and carers when their child has been placed in the room
- whether any patterns shown by the room's use are used to provide appropriate support and challenge to staff

Discussions with pupils

11. Inspectors should hold at least one discussion about behaviour and safety with a group of pupils that the school has worked with to improve their behaviour. These pupils might include those who:

- have previously been excluded more than once
- attend some alternative provision
- have moved from another school on a managed move
- were previously involved in bullying other pupils
- were previously disruptive in lessons but are now 'back on track'

12. During the discussions, inspectors should explore pupils' views about:

- what behaviour is typically like in school and in their lessons
- variations in behaviour from lesson to lesson
- behaviour outside lessons
- the school's reward and sanction system, including what difference this has made to their behaviour
- if they or any of their friends attend an alternative provision for part of the week, why they were selected and how it has helped them
- their understanding of the school's stance on bullying, including what happens if someone bullies or is bullied
- how the school has helped them to improve their behaviour
- how the school is helping them to maintain the improvements
- how well the school has worked with their parents or carers to lead to these improvements
- how often and where they hear derogatory language – including homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, racist, sexist or discriminatory language – and the school's response to this

Scrutiny of documentary evidence

13. Inspectors should scrutinise the school's records of behaviour and the school's analysis of behaviour in order to evaluate how well leaders and managers analyse documentary evidence and then use it to improve the way in which behaviour is managed.

14. Documents should include records and analysis of:

- bullying incidents
- pupils being removed from lessons
- permanent, fixed-term and internal exclusion
- pupils leaving the school roll
- rewards and sanctions, including how senior leaders check that rewards and sanctions are used consistently by all staff

15. Inspectors should consider any patterns shown by such records and analysis, for example pupils being removed more from certain lessons or at a particular time of day, pupils with SEND or pupils from a particular year group or ethnic group receiving more sanctions than others do.

16. Inspectors should use the school's documentation and its analysis to inform their judgements about typical behaviour around the school and in lessons.

Discussion with staff and leaders

17. Inspectors should talk briefly to staff when appropriate, including ECTs and, separately, their mentors and induction tutor where applicable, support staff, cover supervisors, lunchtime supervisors and other non-teaching staff, for example when they are on duty in the playground or in the corridors, to ascertain their views on behaviour. Inspectors must hold a discussion with senior leaders towards the end of the day in order to follow up any issues that have arisen and to discuss leaders' evaluation of behaviour. This discussion should include a focus on how new staff and inexperienced staff are informed of the school's expectations and how they are supported in the management of behaviour.

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1. In this handbook, any reference to the Education Act 2005 includes any amendments made by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Academies Act 2010 and the Education Act 2011. ↩
2. See Section 3(5)(b) of the Education (Individual Pupil Information) (Prescribed Persons) (England) Regulations 2009 (Amended). ↩
3. As set out, for example, in a funding agreement. ↩
4. The term 'report' is used to describe the formal published outcome of the inspection. For section 8 inspections, except where the inspection is deemed to be a section 5 inspection, the report will take the form of a letter. ↩
5. See the Education Act 2005, Section 13. ↩
6. In certain circumstances, any school may be selected for a section 8 'no formal designation' or section 5 inspection rather than a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. This might arise if, for example, concerns are raised by a qualifying complaint about the school. A school may be subject to a section 5 inspection if it has undergone significant change, such as in its age range, or where the quality of provision may have deteriorated significantly. ↩
7. Academy converter schools are schools that have been approved by the Secretary of State to convert to become an academy. ↩
8. The timeframe is within 5 school years from the end of the school year in which the previous section 5 inspection (or the previous section 8 inspection) took place. This means that, for a small number of schools, the follow-on section 5 inspection may be carried out sooner than the usual 1 to 2 years after the inspection has taken place, in order to comply with the prescribed interval for section 5 inspections (The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015). See also the section below, 'Outstanding schools that were formerly exempt from routine inspections'. ↩
9. In accordance with the requirements of The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, in order for the inspection to be a 'relevant inspection' under the regulations, it must be conducted for the purpose of determining that the school remains good or outstanding, and having been so conducted, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is satisfied that the evidence does not suggest that the school would not achieve such a grade if a section 5 inspection were carried out. ↩
10. This statement should not be taken to imply that inspectors are expected to gather a full range of evidence in a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. They are not. However, if they see evidence of this nature then they should deem the inspection to be a section 5 inspection. ↩
11. Section 9 of the Education Act 2005 states that these section 8 inspections can be treated as section 5 inspections. ↩
12. For 1-day inspections, questionnaires should be completed by 11am on the day of inspection. ↩
13. This must be checked with the headteacher as part of the call. Where MATs have delegated responsibility to local governing bodies, this should be set out in a scheme of delegation. Academies should also set out their governance structure in their annual financial statements, which can generally be found through the DfE performance tables' site. Inspectors should clarify where responsibility lies and who they should talk to during the inspection, especially where a school is part of a MAT. ↩
14. Further internal guidance is available to inspectors on obtaining information on complaints in preparation for inspections. ↩
15. The provider information portal (PIP) provides a high-level view for Ofsted inspectors of information about providers that Ofsted inspects and regulates. ↩
16. See warning notices for academies. Inspectors should also note that they can locate individual warning notices by carrying out a search on GOV.UK by typing the name of the academy followed by the words 'warning notice' into the search facility. ↩
17. See Ofsted's framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspections of local authority children's services. ↩
18. See Area SEND inspection: guidance for inspectors. ↩
19. See guidance for schools about information required on a maintained school's website and non-statutory guidance for academies and free schools about information on their websites. ↩
20. Headteachers of schools judged to require improvement who may have concerns about the scheduling of their school's next section 5 inspection may write to the relevant Ofsted regional director to set out the context of their school's present position. ↩
21. See further guidance for education and social care inspectors on carrying out integrated monitoring inspections. ↩
22. For the second and any subsequent monitoring inspection, HMI will normally inform the school the day before the visit. ↩
23. In larger MATs that have regional accountability structures, it may be appropriate to speak to other relevant intermediate leaders or managers in the delegated structure. ↩
24. The lead inspector may need to explain to the governing board and the local authority/the proprietor/the trust that the monitoring inspection is being carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. ↩
25. A section 8 inspection may be treated as if it were an inspection under section 5, using Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's discretionary power under section 9 of the Education Act 2005. ↩
26. See our policy statement about the inspection of new schools. ↩
27. In larger MATs that have regional accountability structures, it may be appropriate to speak to other relevant intermediate leaders or managers in the delegated structure. ↩
28. The lead inspector may need to explain to the governing board and the local authority/ the proprietor/the trust that the monitoring inspection is being carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. ↩
29. See the Education Act 2005, section 44(2). ↩
30. See sections 15(2)(d) and 15(2)(e) of the Education Act 2005; sections 17(1A)(d) and 17(3)(a) of the Education Act 2005 and schedule 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Statements of action must be sent to QALAstatementsofaction@ofsted.gov.uk. ↩
31. See sections 15(2)(d) and 15(2)(e) of the Education Act 2005; sections 17(1A)(d) and 17(3)(a) of the Education Act 2005 and schedule 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Statements of action must be sent to QALAstatementsofaction@ofsted.gov.uk. ↩
32. Ofsted does not have the power to investigate individual complaints or incidents of a safeguarding and/or child protection nature. However, such matters may raise whole-school issues, for example about the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe. It is the whole-school issues that will be the focus of these inspections. ↩
33. Under section 11A-C of the Education Act 2005, Ofsted has specific powers to investigate certain complaints known as qualifying complaints. ↩
34. Note: for different groups of pupils, such as pupils with SEND, inspectors must compare the school's figure for that group to the national figure for all pupils, not the national figure for the group. ↩ ↩2
35. This should include records and analysis of bullying incidents, pupils being removed from lessons, the use of rewards and sanctions, exclusion and 'internal exclusion'. ↩
36. The time should be arranged according to when pupils leave the school – this aspect of the school day should be observed so inspectors need to plan accordingly. ↩
37. For example, racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, or sexual language, or language that is derogatory about people with SEND or any other group, or aggressive personal comments about physical appearance or ability. ↩

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